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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF WHALING IN A WHALING COMMUNITY IN ABASHIRI

BY

© MASAMI IWASAKI

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 1988

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Cultural Significance of Whaling in a Whaling Community in Abashiri", submitted by Masami Iwasaki in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date: March 24, 1988

ABSTRACT

The ten year moratorium on all commercial whaling has been passed at the International Whaling Commission meeting and will come into effect in the 1987/88 pelagic season and the 1988 coastal season. This decision will be applied to small-type coastal whaling in Japan. However, Japan objects to the decision on the basis that Japanese small-type whaling, like aboriginal/subsistence whaling which is exempt from the moratorium, has been historically rooted in local communities and it continues to be important in various whaling communities at the present time.

An attempt was made to investigate the issue of social/cultural significance of small-type whaling in a whaling community in Abashiri, in the eastern part of Hokkaido. Ethnographic research was conducted in the summer of 1986 in Abashiri with a major focus on the history of whaling, social structure of the whaling community and the cultural role of whaling in the local community. As a result, it became evident that a unique social organization has been established in the whaling community and it has been reinforced by occupational specialization as well as numerous social/cultural activities such as training systems, gift exchange, cuisine and spiritual practices. Within a framework of cultural ecology, each social/cultural activity and its effect on the social organization was studied.

Lastly, based on the research data, the question whether Japanese small-type whaling should be considered as commercial whaling is discussed.

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I. Introduction

People have long depended on the resources that nature has provided for them. Mountain people have established their life style by hunting available animals and gathering available fruits and roots in the surrounding area. Maritime people have explored the ocean for their food resources, Dependency on nature has marked man's history throughout the world.

For several hundred years, the people living in the eastern part of Hokkaido, namely Abashiri, have benefitted from the marine resources obtainable from the Okhotsk Sea. Being rich as food resources, whales have been utilized by the local community over time. At present, Abashiri is the only place in Hokkaido where small-type whaling continues to operate. Although the whaling community in Abashiri has gone through several major changes over the years, it has managed to maintain a unique social organization, religious practice and training system, as well as the highly specialized technology required for whale hunting.

Currently, Japanese small-type coastal whaling, land based whaling operation which harvests Minke whales is being questioned, a situation which will determine the future of the whaling communities throughout Japan. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) has decided to impose a moratorium on all commercial whaling in the world. This means there will be no whaling operations except for research purposes and for subsistence activity. Since the IWC classifies all the whaling operations into three categories: 1) commercial whaling, 2) aboriginal/ subsistence whaling and 3) whaling for scientific research,

the question on an appropriateness of such classification was raised and is presently under discussion. Meanwhile, Japanese small-type whalers are currently suggesting that small-type coastal whaling has more in common with aboriginal/subsistence whaling than with commercial whaling and so should share the exemption (Hokkai Times, 1987 6/24). As a result the controversy over the issue of aboriginal/subsistence whaling has placed the Abashiri whaling community at the center of public attention.

In order to investigate the questions raised and find a possible answer to the issue, ethnographic research was conducted in the summer of 1986 in Abashiri. This thesis reports the results of the research which hopefully contribute useful information to an on-going debate whose goal, as in the IWC mandate, is the rational management of whale stock and the regulation of the whale fishing. Adequacy of the IWC's classification of whaling (as either commercial, aboriginal/subsistence or research) will be discussed as will the definition of aboriginal/subsistence whaling proposed by Mitchell and Reeves (1980). Furthermore, the productive aspects of Abashiri whaling will not be discussed in this thesis, as they have little relevance in an examination of the cultural significance of whaling activity in the community.

Lastly, an attempt will be made to clarify some of the core arguments, which appear to hinder the resolution of the issue, through the analysis of the ethnocentrism inherent in the anti-whaling position.

II. The Problem: IWC's Decision

The rich marine resources obtainable from whales had been considered the common property of the people who had access to them. The United States, Britain, Australia, Japan and other countries enjoyed pre-eminence in commercial whaling during the nineteenth century. The western countries, with their more sophisticated modern technology, had their own share of whales, mainly to produce whale oil for lighting. Japan and aboriginal whaling groups operated in a traditional whale fishery using net and hand harpoons in the coastal area in order to obtain food resources. Extensive whaling operations by the whaling countries, namely the western countries, resulted in serious damage to the whale stocks around the traditional whaling grounds. This led to inventions of more efficient means of whale hunting and exploration of new whaling grounds. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the whaling countries started to send factory ships equipped with Norwegian cannon harpoons and a number of catcher boats to the Antarctic. Japan, following Norway, the Netherlands, South Africa, the Soviet Union and Great Britain, joined the pelagic whaling in 1934 (NHK Shuzaihan, 1986:65).

The history of unrestricted whaling had to end because of concern over the possible depletion of whale stocks throughout the world. In fact, the more efficient whaling technology and over-hunting by the whaling groups of different nationalities affected the whale stocks, especially humpback whales and blue whales, beyond their regenerative capacity. In 1944, a whaling conference was held in London to set a total quota of 16,000 Blue Whale Units (BWU)[1] for the first post-war season in the Antarctic (Hoel, 1985:49). This decision was

significant in that it brought the international whaling scene into the era of resource management.

In 1946, the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) was signed by fourteen nations. To implement ICRW, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was established for the purpose of "protection of all species from over-fishing" and "facilitation of the orderly development of the whaling industry" (Hoel, 1985:51). Whaling in that period was carried out mainly in the Antarctic, and the whaling fleet was expanded every year. Consequently, countries competed against each other for a larger proportion of the total annual catch defined by IWC. Increasing competition among the whaling ships created the "Whaling Olympics" in which the better-equipped ships got the greater share. In regulating the annual catch, the BWU system apparently created further complications. Hoel summarizes:

> The BWU system failed to discriminate between the different management requirements of the various whale species and stocks, as the various species and stocks were not distinguished from each other. Whalers were therefore not prevented from exploiting the largest and most commercially valuable species to the point of commercial extinction.
>
> (1985:56)

Ironically, the depletion of whale stocks became severe under the IWC's regulation, despite the original intention of ICRW. In 1960, a committee of three scientists was formed to evaluate the situation of the whale stocks in the Antarctic. After the investigation, the committee suggested that IWC abandon the BWU system and substantially cut the fin whale quota. This recommendation was rejected by the IWC. In 1963 the total annual catch (TAC) of whales was reduced to 10,000 BWU, and in 1965 the TAC was reduced below the

sustainable yield level[2]. By 1969, the IWC made the first attempt to regulate each whale species separately.

One noticeable phenomenon in the IWC during 1972-1984 was the drastic increase in the member countries: the number tripled from 14 to 40, most of which are non-whaling nations. This changed the atmosphere of the IWC from "the whaler's club" to "anti-whaling salon" (NHK Shuzaihan, 1986:147).

During this period, major developments occurred in the IWC's whale management policy. The adoption of a species-by-species approach made the IWC policy more science-based. The following are the three categories which were suggested by the IWC Scientific Committee to classify each whale stock:

> - Initial Management Stocks (IMS) which may be reduced in a controlled manner to achieve maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels or optimum levels as these are determined.
> - Sustained Management Stocks (SMS) which should be maintained at or near MSY levels and then at optimum levels as these are determined.
> - Protection Stocks (PS) which are below the level of SMS and should be fully protected.
>
> (IWC Chairman's Report of the 26th Meeting, 1974)

The IWC attempted to manage the whale populations more efficiently with the scientific classification of the stocks. However, due to the lack of sufficient data, which is indispensable for such classifications, the IWC's effort fell short of successful application. Despite the problems which needed to be solved, Allen points out the positive side effect:

> Introduction of the new management procedure has had the effect of increasing substantially the number of stocks which are now protected from exploitation, and of reducing the catch quotas for most of the others.
>
> (Allen, 1980:29, quoted in Hoel, 1985:91)

As noted under the new management policy, the total annual quota was reduced year-by-year and more whale stocks were totally protected from hunting. The effect of the more restrictive management of whales, needless to say, was greater on the whaling nations. Another issue which placed more pressure on the whaling nations was the question of the ethics of whale hunting, because the anti-whaling movement criticized the whaling nations for unethical killing of wales (see Chap. VI).

The anti-whaling movement focussed its activities upon achieving the total abandonment of commercial whaling. This objective was first raised in 1972 at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) in Stockholm. UNCHE recommended that a ten year moratorium be placed on commercial whaling. In 1982, the IWC adopted a ban on all commercial whaling, which was to become effective during the 1985/86 pelagic season and the 1986 coastal season. However, as is allowed under IWC regulation, Japan, USSR, Norway and Peru filed their objections to the decision. Later Japan had to withdraw the objection because of the economic sanctions threatened by the U.S.A.

Currently, the Japanese Government is claiming that small-type whaling in coastal areas in Japan is subject to the "aboriginal/subsistence exemption" and that limited pelagic whaling should be continued for scientific data collection. According to an ad hoc Technical Committee Working Group on aboriginal/subsistence whaling, aboriginal/subsistence whaling refers to

> Whaling for purpose of local aboriginal consumption carried out by or on behalf of aboriginal, indigenous, or native peoples who share strong community, financial, social and cultural ties relating to a continuing traditional dependence on whaling and on uses of whales.
> (IWC doc. 33/14:1981 quoted in Hoel, 1985:88)

Under such exemptions, the Inuit whaling communities in Alaska, for example are given an annual quota to catch bowhead, which are a protected species and cannot otherwise be hunted.

Presently, a question being discussed at the IWC is whether Japanese small-type coastal whaling should be considered as commercial whaling or as aboriginal/subsistence whaling. In the course of these discussions, a major issue has been raised, namely whether "aboriginal/subsistence" whaling is an inappropriate way to categorize all non-commercial whaling. Indeed, categorizing Japanese traditional small-type whaling requires careful consideration of the social, economic and cultural conditions involved in this form of whaling, and especially the role of cash and non-cash economic transactions in the whaling operation. The whaling nations such as Japan and the U.S.S.R. have agreed to stop all commercial whaling after the 1987 whaling season. However, the question of aboriginal/subsistence whaling will continue to be discussed.

III. Historical Background of Whaling in Hokkaido

A. Introduction

The history of Hokkaido is unique in that an extensive migration of people from the south in the 19th century had a drastic effect on the development of the region. Shisamu, the Ainu word for the Japanese group, eventually shifted the direction of the growth of the region through the introduction of new technology which had been developed in the south. Such circumstances consequently produced two distinct meanings of the word "tradition" in the history of Hokkaido. One meaning of "tradition" refers to the cultural heritage fostered among the Ainu, and the other meaning to the culture developed in the south and introduced to Hokkaido later. It is imperative that one observe the history of Hokkaido with an understanding of two sets of cultural traditions, which are both equally important. Thus, the historical background of whaling needs to be examined with such an approach. To avoid unnecessary confusion, the whaling tradition which was originated by the groups in Hokkaido is termed the North Whaling Tradition, whereas the whaling developed in the areas outside of Hokkaido, such as in Honshu, Shikoku or Kyushu, is termed the South Whaling Tradition.

B. North Whaling Tradition

The primary stage of the North Whaling Tradition is observable in the archaeological records. The following diagram illustrates the various sites where some indication of utilization of whale resources has been recognized.

Figure 1

Sites where Bone of Cetaceans were Found in Hokkaido (Nishimoto, 1985)

This figure has been removed because of the unavailability of copy right permission.

The earliest evidence indicating utilization of whales by the local people has been found at a site dating back to the Jomon period. Pieces of whale bone are frequently found mixed with bones of other animals in the Jomon shell mounds in Hokkaido as well as other parts of Japan. One such site is found in Kushiro (4) where the skulls of porpoises were found arranged in a spokewise manner, which is interpreted to mean that some religious ceremony took place there (Nishimoto, 1985:91, Udagawa, 1979:65). Pieces of harpoon heads along with some animal bones were also found at this site (Nishimoto,

1985:91). Funkawan Inlet seems to have been a rich area for whale resources (5). A piece of lower jaw bone was found at the Jomon site along the Funkawan (Nishimoto, 1985:91). Site 6, where whale bone with a scar indicating an intentional cut by men was excavated, is known as a Satsumon cultural site (ibid:91). The Satsumon cultural complex is understood as a prototype of the Ainu culture and existed concurrently with the Okhotsk culture.

The Okhotsk cultural people, who lived in the northeastern region of Hokkaido until the 11th century, are thought to have been efficient hunters. Archaeological evidence excavated at the sites (1,2,3) indicates their active fishing and sea-mammal hunting operation using fairly sophisticated tools made of stone and animal bones and horns (Ooi, 1982:55). Among such tools were found many pieces of whale bone apparently used as harpoon-heads, mortars, and hoes. This find suggests an extensive use of whale resources by the Okhotsk cultural people (Ooi, 1982, Udagawa, 1979, Kodama, 1948, Yonemura, 1981). Moreover, a needle holder with a picture of a man catching a whale engraved on it was excavated at a site in eastern Hokkaido (Ooi, 1982).

Figure 2

Picture Engraved on a Needle Holder Made of Bone (Ooi, 1982:59)

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It may be safe to interpret the picture of a man with some kind of rope tied to a whale as suggesting a whaling activity operated among the Okhotsk cultural people. After the 11th century, the Okhotsk people, with their sophisticated technology, gradually mixed with the Ainu people and finally were assimilated into the Ainu group.

Another important period in the North Whaling Tradition is the Ainu period. It has long been a controversy whether the Ainu actively hunted whales or passively benefitted from stranded whales. The best known paper supporting the argument for Ainu whaling was written by Natori (1940). Natori interviewed some old Ainu men, one of whom had the experience of catching two whales himself in the Funkawan Inlet. Recalling the old days, the old man said:

> ... we went to catch whales at the beginning of May when our fishing season started. We did not hunt whale exclusively. We caught fish and other sea-mammals and when we saw a whale close by, we threw poisoned harpoons at it. I could throw it for a distance of 20 to 30 yards easily ....
>
> (ibid:140)

Natori conducted a thorough study of Ainu whaling and reports in his paper the different aspects of whaling: preparation of poison, whaling crew and fleet, taboo and rituals and the equipment. He concludes his paper by saying that the whaling operation played a significant role in the Ainu community along the Funkawan Inlet.

The latest recorded date for whaling among the Ainu is around the turn of the century. A book on Ainu culture published in 1964 by the Hokkaido Board of Education cites Natori and states, "Beside utilizing stranded whales, the Ainu went out to Funkawan Inlet and hunted whales using poisoned harpoons" (1964:62).

On the other hand, some archival materials describe Ainu whaling as a passive utilization of stranded whales:

> Whale migrate off the coastal area throughout Hokkaido. The record indicates a long history in the trade of whale products with the southerners.... However, the fishermen in Hokkaido were not engaged in an intensive whaling operation but caught the whale which was stranded on the shore. People worshipped whale as Ebisu, the god of fishery, who brings the herring to the coastal area for them to catch. Thus, the fishermen never intensively hunted the whale.
>
> (Hokkaidocho, 1957:181)

Apparently, the fishermen of that time recognized the connection between whale and herring and regarded it as an important determining factor in a successful herring catch. However, the whaling activity is rooted in more than a functional value. The local fishermen regarded whales as sacred beings through which the god of fishery was worshipped. This spiritual value of the whale was also recorded in the government archives (Sharicho, 1970:217).

Regardless of whether the Ainu were whale hunters or not, they undoubtedly had close ties with whale resources. This is observable in the present life of the Ainu. The best evidence to prove that some groups of the Ainu greatly depended on the whale in their material as well as spiritual lives can be found in their language. The most explicit example is the usage of the word "Funbe", meaning "whale" in the Ainu language, in naming the places around Hokkaido. Sarashina states in his book about Ainu culture that the town of Funbe in Rebun Island, Funbe no taki (the Whale waterfalls) in Hiroo and Funbe shuma (whale craggy) in Abuta were named by the Ainu (1976:415). In the Ainu period, the word "Funbe" apparently had been used to indicate where whales were seen or stranded.

"Funbe" also appears in the common expressions used by the Ainu. For example, Kayano provides illustration by reference to a magical phrase used when one had to use a needle before leaving home:

> pishita humpe yanyats aiewa kusu kashi kopashikusu neap semapa otstasatsma keokots kumipi ikiri hechaue kusutapta kuikishiri nena
> (I have to use a needle because I ripped my clothes with the brushwood holding thatched wall at the entrance when I was dashing out to see the whale landed on the beach.)
> (1980:153)

The Ainu believed that by chanting this magical phrase after getting a thread into a needle they were able to avoid any bad luck which may otherwise occur.

Ainu folktales and folk games are rich with the figurative use of whales. In "Onino iwaya", one of the most popular folktales, the whale is used to describe a size of the oni, an ogre:

> ... so the ogre carried two young men and myself on his left side and a large whale in his right hand....
> (Kayano, unpublished)

Some children's games are also a good source depicting a close interaction of the Ainu people with the whale. In Kujira Odori, the whale dance, one person who is supposedly a stranded whale lies down in the center of the circle. The others dance around the whale singing, "We hear the sound that a whale is stranded on the shore" (Sarashina, 1976:420).

The abundance of recorded material from the Ainu period presents us with a clear picture of their extensive interaction with whales. Besides those mentioned above, the government archives provides accurate information to help us understand Ainu whaling. Old government records indicate that whale products were one of the trade items between Hokkaido and Honshu around 1664 (Hokkaidocho, 1957:181, Nemuro 1970:223). The available archival materials indicate that whale products were traded with the products from the south until the beginning of the Meiji era (1868) when a major political reform swept through Japan (Hokkaidocho, 1957:182).

In short, the North Whaling Tradition was fostered during the period before the colonization of Hokkaido. The Okhotsk cultural people and the proto-Ainu originated and eventually established a primary stage of whaling in Hokkaido. Later, the modern Ainu took over and developed what we have denoted as the North Whaling Tradition until the turn of the century.

C. Migration of the South Whaling Tradition

The traditional technology developed in the south began to migrate into Hokkaido toward the end of the feudal period (around 1800). In the case of whaling, Japan's feudal government had the intention of establishing a whaling industry in Hokkaido for two major reasons:

security of the north and an expansion of the whaling grounds. Whaling operations by foreign whaling ships around the Japanese islands threatened both the Japanese whaling industry and Japanese security.

At that time, Japan's feudal government became aware of the need for a tighter guard and an increased defence force around Japan. Hokkaido, having been a rich whaling ground which attracted many foreign whaling ships, became a focus of the intensive guard against possible attack by the foreign ships. Whalers, with highly sophisticated sailing techniques as well as well-trained work groups, were regarded as the best soldiers. Moreover, the traditional whaling villages were suffering from depleted whale stocks caused by over-hunting by the foreign whaling ships. Thus, there was a great need for the whalers in the traditional whaling villages to explore new whaling grounds.

It was only natural that the Japanese government should attempt to establish a whaling industry in Hokkaido because of these reasons (Kanari, 1983:61; Fukuyama, 1943:18). Oyakata of Kujiragumi, the head of a whaling group, was sent to Hokkaido from Katsuyama, one of the traditional whaling villages in Boso Peninsula. The first attempt was made in 1802, the second in 1854 and the last trip was in 1863. Despite their enthusiasm, the last groups, after staying in Sakhalin for two months, had to give up their plan because of illness (Kanari 1983:62).

Another person attempted to introduce whaling to Hokkaido at about the same time. Manjiro Nakahama, who had worked on an American whaling ship, was sent to Hakodate around 1862 to teach the local people the American whaling technique (Kanari, 1983:63). In

1866, a magistrate's office in Hakodate made an official announcement encouraging the whalers-to-be to receive training on the foreign whaling ships which entered at Hakodate port (Hokkaidocho, 1957:182). Although their efforts to introduce whaling technology to Hokkaido before the Meiji era did not meet with much success, they surely opened a door for the later establishment of the whaling industry in Hokkaido.

The Meiji era (1868-1911) was marked by many ambitious men who conducted whaling in Hokkaido with reasonable success. Suisan Jikkan kept an accurate record of whaling operations and the whale catch of that period (1896). An interesting fact is that net-whaling which was originally developed in Wakayama, Tosa, and Kyushu, occurred in Hokkaido at that time:

> Whaling in Hokkaido is unique in its method. Once you see a whale in the sea, sail out right away. First, use the finer net to chase it so that the whale eventually breaks through the net. Place the thicker net around the whale next, and shoot a harpoon. Continue shooting harpoons until it slows down. The last harpoon is shot into the part just below the spouting hole. Drag the whale to the flensing base... Hokkaido method is better in that the whale can be easily brought up if it sinks into the water after death. Also with this method, you can whale anywhere if there are no large-size rocks and the depth is 15 fathoms.
> (ibid, 1896:225, Hokusui Kyokai, 1977:559)

This record continues and presents the whale catch during the Meiji era with a note saying that they were catching humpback whale and grey whale:

> Number of whale caught in three years from Meiji 3 to 5 was 18. 4 whales were caught in 3 years from Meiji 17 to 19. 4 whales were caught in Meiji 20. 5 in Meiji 21 and 30 in Meiji 22.
> (ibid, 1896:227, Hokusui Kyokai, 1977:559)

Such attempts to introduce net whaling to Hokkaido during the Meiji era were made first by a man from the Yamaguchi clan in Honshu at the very beginning of the Meiji era. However, he had to abandon it in three years (Hokusuikyokai, 1977:561). Later, in Meiji 20 (1888), Tomoichi Saito from a Samurai family in the Ishikawa prefecture, Honshu, moved to Hokkaido with the intention of establishing whaling in the northern part of Hokkaido. At first, Saito was not as successful as he had anticipated. In Meiji 22, he was assigned to be head of the whaling section of Dainipponteikoku Suisankaisha established in Meiji 21. Dainipponteikoku Suisankaisha was originally established as a fishery company specialized in sea otter fishing. With Saito's involvement, it expanded its business into whaling, and used the modified net-whaling technique which was developed uniquely in the Ishikawa prefecture. The autobiography of Tomoichi Saito contains a detailed description of the modified net-whaling that was practiced in Teshio, Hokkaido:

> First spread the net. When a whale is caught in the head, it starts to swim faster with the head breaking through the net. Then, a boat approaches close to the whale and shoots a hand harpoon. Quickly throw bags of pebbles tied to the boat into the water in order to give weight to the boat. You have to maintain a good balance when throwing weights into the sea. The harpoons were made so that harpoon heads open up after being shot into the whale and stays in it. There is a rope attached to the harpoon connecting to the boat so that the whale would drag the whaling boat. Shoot more harpoons until it gets weakened...
>
> (Nakamura, 1985:60)

The attempt of another man from Nemuro to engage in whaling with an American whaling ship is also recorded in Hokusuikyokai Hyakunenshi:

> Numerous whales can be seen off shore of Nemuro, Kunashiri and Shikotan in the summer and fall. Mr. Yanagida and Mr. Suzuki bought a wrecked American whaling ship and plan to start whaling in the area.
> (Hokusui Kyokai, 1984:39)

Net whaling was continued until the end of the Meiji era. However, a serious depletion of the whale stock around Hokkaido caused the traditional net whaling method to die out. This marked the end of the traditional net whaling period throughout Japan. The history of the net whaling tradition in Hokkaido is summarized in the following diagram.

Figure 3

Map of Whaling Operation in Hokkaido

During the Meiji Era

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M = Meiji Period (1868-1911)

(Hokkaidocho, 1886-1906)

Teshio and Kitami appear to be the two major whaling bases during the net whaling period in Hokkaido. At the beginning of the Meiji era when net whaling was difficult in the south, companies and individuals, such as Tomoichi Saito, Dainipponteikoku Suisankaisha and others, had discovered that the area was suitable for the continuous operation of net whaling. However, their hard work was not rewarded for long because of the depletion of whales caused by the foreign whaling ships. Finally, net whaling was abandoned around Meiji 30 (1898).

Jyuro Oka brought Japanese whaling into a new era at the end of the Meiji period when he acquired the Norwegian whaling method,[3] the cannon-fired harpoon, and brought it back to Japan. In 1909, he established Nihon Enyogyogyo and conducted whaling with the new method. He started whaling operations in the Yamaguchi prefecture and in Chishima, Hokkaido. Once again, Tomoichi Saito was brought back into the Hokkaido whaling scene and was asked to lead Dainihonsuisan, which was later unified with Toyo Hogei (Tato, 1985:28).

The impact that the South Whaling Tradition made in Hokkaido was, needless to say, of great significance. The acquisition of the new whaling technology provided an alternate subsistence way of life for the Hokkaido fishermen. At the same time, development of the whaling grounds around Hokkaido enabled the whalers in the south to continue their whaling tradition.

D. History of Whaling in Abashiri

The modern period in Hokkaido whaling began in the Taisho era (1911-1925). Whaling companies whose main offices were in Honshu built whaling bases in Hokkaido and started land-based, large-type whaling at the beginning of the Taisho era. With the Norwegian whaling

technique, the more sophisticated whaling method, they were able to catch larger whales such as fin, humpback, sei and sperm whales. Abashiri was one of the cities where Tokyo-based whaling companies built their bases. According to the "History of Whaling" put together by the city of Abashiri,

> Toyo Hogei built its base in Abashiri in Taisho 4(1915) and started whaling in the Okhotsk Sea. The whale was so abundant that we could see whales spouting off the coast from the city. We often had whales stranded on the beach. People gathered to watch the whale flensing operation and there were postcards, with the people whaling, sold at that time.
>
> (1971:911-913)

Figure 4

People Watch Flensing Operation: Toyo Hogei Taisho 8 (1919)

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Three years later, in 1918, the Abashiri base was closed because of the inconvenient location. However, in Showa 6 (1931), Toyo Hogei rebuilt the whaling base at a more convenient location in Abashiri and resumed their operation. Toyo Hogei changed hands and became Nihon Hogei. With a few years break, Nihon Hogei continued whaling in the coastal area of Abashiri. Later, Tosa Hogei, another Tokyo-based whaling company, built their whaling base in Abashiri to supply the increasing demand for whales.

Around 1945, when a food shortage became critical during World War II, seven whaling companies were operating in the Abashiri area.

Figure 5

Postcard Illustrating Large-type Whaling in the Coastal Area in Hokkaido

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Whale meat and blubber were a very important food source for the local people during and after World War II. As a counter-measure for the food shortage, small-type whaling originated in Abashiri with the assistance of the experienced whalers from Kyushu. In contrast to large-type whaling, which suffered from poor catches in the 1950's and eventually closed down, small-type whaling was expanded because of a rich minke whale stock available in the Okhotsk Sea. A tourist guide book published in 1958 describes the city of Abashiri as a city of small-type whaling:

> Boo, a whistle blows 2 or 3 times. The people in Abashiri listen until it stops. They learn how many whales the boat is bringing back that day.... The people rejoice with a good catch of the day. The women think to themselves that they would fix a whale dish for supper.... When small whaling boats find Minke whale, they all gather around it and harpoon it. In the evening, the whale factory is filled with men busy flensing the whale with a large sword-like knife....
>
> (Niregane, 1958:90)

Earlier efforts to establish whaling in Hokkaido were finally rewarded in the modern period with an active whaling operation in the coastal area of the Okhotsk Sea. During the period of food shortage, the whale industry contributed not only to the local community members, but for the people throughout Hokkaido. At present, two whaling boats are based in Hokkaido, both in Abashiri, which carry out whaling in the Okhotsk Sea.

IV. Whaling Community in Abashiri

A. Abashiri

Abashiri, located in the east end of Hokkaido has been developed as one of the largest fishing towns in Hokkaido.

Figure 6

Map of Hokkaido

Utilizing the rich marine resources available in the Okhotsk Sea, Abashiri has grown to a population of 43,082 (Hokkaido Shinbun, 1987: 95). Fishery census in 1985 reports that 508 people are engaged in some form of fishery such as offshore trawl fishing, gill-net fishing, stationary-net fishing and others. The following table indicates the distribution of the fishermen in each fishery.

Figure 7

Number of People Engaged in the Fishery in Abashiri
(Hokkaidocho 1985:248)

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Among this fishing population are those who are engaged in small-type whaling in the surrounding areas of Abashiri. According to the census, eighteen full-time minke whalers reside in Abashiri. As mentioned in the chapter on the history of whaling, small-type whaling was extensive throughout Hokkaido as a countermeasure to food shortages created by World War II. However, most of the whaling bases have been closed because of an international restriction on the annual catch and the resulting economic non-viability of the whaling industry. Abashiri, now, is the only city in Hokkaido where whaling is still based.

B. Fishery Management

1. Fishery Management in Japan

Fishermen in Japan have developed, through generations, a way to manage the fishery resources available in the surrounding ocean. The principles of the Japanese fishery management system, have been reviewed recently in a Food and Agriculture Organization report (Asada, Hirasawa, Nagasaki, 1983). Historically, two types of regulatory regime have been established under Japanese Fisheries Law[4]: 1) the common fishing rights to regulate the use of available fishery resources in the coastal area, and 2) a licensing system to control the harvest of migratory fish by restricting the number and size of vessels in operation (ibid:6).

The fishing rights system was set up so that the use of coastal fishing grounds could be regulated to avoid unnecessary competition among the fishermen. The holders of rights are to use the allotted fishing ground for productive purposes. Under this system, three kinds of fishing rights are awarded to the local fishermen: the common fishing rights, the demarcated fishing rights and set-net rights. The common fishing rights are awarded to a Fishery Cooperative Association[5] (FCA) for the use of the adjacent water for: 1) fisheries for sea weeds, shell fish, crustaceans and sedentary fin fish species, 2) fisheries employing fixed gear, eg. traps and the like, 3) beach seine, boat seine and other fisheries which are relatively immobile or stationary on the fishing ground, and 4) inland-water fisheries (ibid:9). Demarcated fishing rights are awarded to the cooperative associations and to companies and individuals who conduct large-scale

aquacultural projects such as for pearls. These fishing rights were established primarily to regulate the use of fishing grounds for aquacultural operation. Thirdly, the set net fishing rights are awarded to individuals, companies and FCA for the use of large-scale nets. The practical implementation of the distribution and allocation of such fishing rights is left in the hands of the local FCA.

A fishing licensing system was established for effective management and the conservation of migratory fish stocks. Licenses are granted to each fishing vessel operated in accordance with the size and operational conditions of the fisheries. Three government agents are responsible for issuing the fishing license: the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, prefectural governors, and the district governors (ibid:10). The fisheries regulated on the basis of international agreement or widely-ranging in operation under coordinated regulations by the central government, are subject to a license issued by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. There are some fisheries which require ministerial purview and administrative order. Fisheries such as boat-based stick-held dipnet for saury and jigging for squid from vessels over 30 tons must have a consolidated base under ministerial permission due to their wider ranging operations.

Some fisheries require licenses issued by prefectual governors to restrict the catch effort in local fisheries. Two kinds of such licenses are currently in effect:

> i) In the first class are those fisheries in which operations center mainly in the coastal waters of a particular area, i.e., a prefecture or metropolitan district.... The fisheries coming under this sort of arrangement are numerous and varied. In fact, nearly all major coastal fisheries are subject thereto.

ii) The second class embraces coastal fisheries that owing to a wide operational range and relatively high productive capability, require coordination across two or more prefectures.... The class at present includes four fisheries, e.g. medium-sized seiners (five tons and over, but generally not exceeding 40 tons) and small trawlers (under 15 tons).

(ibid:13)

2. Fishery Management in Abashiri

Regulated by the Fishery Law, the Abashiri fishing community has been making efforts to effectively manage the fish stocks and to maintain the profitable fishery production (see Appendix I). At present, there are two local FCA in the Abashiri region: Abashiri FCA and Nishi Abashiri FCA which share an administrative responsibility in each jurisdictional area (see Appendix 2). All of the fishing groups and individuals are members of the local FCA, with one exception: small-type whaling has always been independently operated since it was established in Abashiri. The Oyakata (owner) of a whaling boat explains:

> Whaling is licensed directly from the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (AFF) so that I work closely with the Ministry of AFF rather than the local FCA. We have established a contact with wholesalers without going through FCA and sell whale meat directly to them. I recall one time I tried to join the Abashiri FCA and somehow things did not work
> (Field notes, 1986)

The situation appears to be different in each whaling town in Honshu. In some cases, the small-type whaling is operated under the administration of the local FCA, whereas in Abashiri, small-type whaling is a separate entity outside of the local FCA. Because of their direct interaction with the wholesalers, whalers have more interdependent relationships with the local market than do other fishing groups.

Management of each fishing resource is operated through both licensing and fishing rights systems in the Abashiri region as well as elsewhere in Japan (see Appendix 3). Each year the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries assigns a quota for each licensee who attempts to harvest the fishery resources to the limit of the given quota. Fishing rights holders are assigned fishing grounds and the fishing period by the local FCA for their fishing operation. In principle, the fishery management system, which has developed over centuries, is working satisfactorily for each fishery. The significance of such a management system is that the local traditional administrative procedure of fishery resource management functions as a base for contemporary systems. Ruddle writes,

> ... there developed gradually over many centuries a complex system of locally varied customary village tenure and rights to fisheries in coastal marine waters. These were incorporated into national legislation through the fisheries laws of 1901 and 1949. As a result, the local Fisheries Cooperative Association has emerged as the principal corporate fisheries rights holding group in Japanese coastal waters.
>
> (1986:2)

In short, the fishery management system has evolved from the traditional distribution patterns of fishing rights. In the present situation, the local FCA, as holder of coastal fishing rights, and the Government bodies, who issue the license for harvesting the migratory fish, are regulating all the fishing activities in Japan for the purpose of resource conservation and/or the maintenance of the orderly operation of fisheries.

C. Whaling Community

1. A Core Whaling Group

The smallest unit of the whaling community[6] in Abashiri is a core group who are all directly involved in whaling activity; the core whaling groups consist of Oyakata or Senshu, a boat owner, and eight other crew members.

Figure 8

A Core Whaling Group

Oyakata	a boat owner
1. Hoshu	a harpooner
2. Sencho	a boat captain
3. Kikanshi	an engineer
4. Kohancho	a head sailor
5. Kohanin	a sailor
6. Kohanin	a sailor
7. Kohanin	a sailor
8. Makanai	a cook

The crew members are full-time whalers who operate whaling exclusively in the summer. It is important to emphasize that whalers do not get involved in other fishing or hunting activities for economic or occupational purposes at any other time. A core whaling group is therefore totally dependent on whaling for its livelihood.

The group is organized in a fairly hierarchical order with well defined responsibilities shared by each member. Oyakata, the boat owner, rarely works on the boat with the other whalers. He is the administrative organizer of the group in charge of financial management and marketing of the products. In the case of one minke boat in Abashiri, Oyakata had whaled for 20 years with other whalers on the boat. Taking the responsibility as a crew member whilst on the boat, he was no longer Oyakata.

Figure 9

Oyakata (second from the right) Talking with the Crew in Front of the Whaling Boat

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Traditionally, ownership of a boat is inherited and passed down to the male successor in the family. Oyakata of both whaling boats in Abashiri are the eldest sons of the former Oyakata. In either boat, kin-relationship between Oyakata and the crew members is not crucial. At present there is one whaler who is a brother of Oyakata. However, the kin-relationship is not significant between Oyakata and the crew. In short, Oyakata owns the boat and has an administrative responsibility.

Hoshu, a harpooner, on the other hand, possesses an inclusive power over every crew member on the boat. Some whalers commented:

> Hoshu has such power over everyone on the boat. Hoshu would hit us on the head when we were slow. That was how we learned to be a whaler. (Field notes, 1986)

Hoshu has a responsibility not only in firing a harpoon, but also in every decision made during whaling. Thus, success of the hunt depends, in large part, on the ability of Hoshu.

The job as Hoshu had been hereditary during the traditional net-whaling period. However, at present, this tradition has not continued simply because of insufficient training. The sons of Hoshu do not get enough exposure to whaling or enough socialization with the other whalers when they are young (see Chap. V.B-1). Rather, Oyakata recruits a new Hoshu from outside of the community and, if necessary, from the south. Most of the Hoshu in Abashiri come from the traditional whaling villages where they grew up trained to be Hoshu. One of the characteristics of Hokkaido whaling is that it was established by the whalers who moved to the north from the traditional whaling areas to explore the new fishing grounds.

Hoshu often have whalers among their relatives and were influenced by them to become Hoshu. For example, Mr. Maeda, the late Hoshu, had an uncle who introduced him to whaling. He worked under his uncle as a cook when he first worked on a whaling boat at the age of 16. After working as a cook, Mr. Maeda was gradually promoted to other job responsibilities and finally became Hoshu. To summarize, though Hoshu at present has been strongly influenced by other kin-related whalers, the role is not an inherited one.

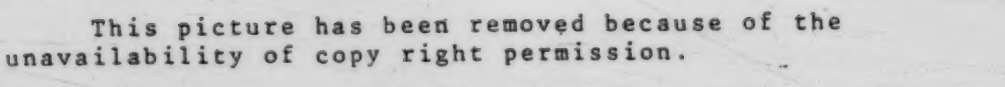
The other crew members have less important responsibilities than does Hoshu, although successful whaling requires cooperation by everyone. Sencho, a boat captain, is responsible for navigation. In some cases, Hoshu serves concurrently as Sencho if he is qualified to do so. Kikanshi, an engineer, is in charge of the mechanical operation of the boat. Kohancho, a head sailor, and Kohanin, the sailors, are the ones who support Hoshu and Sencho and are in charge of flensing a whale. Makanai, a cook, prepares meals for the crew while on the boat.

Kin relationships do not appear to be important among the present crew members in both whaling boats. However, there are two Kohanin, sons of the late Hoshu, who are brothers and work on the same boat. This may be a trace of the traditional training system (see Chap. V, B-1).

Besides the jobs assigned to each member, other important work is shared by everyone, especially searching for a whale once they get to the whaling ground. Although the whaling equipment may be modern, their method is fairly traditional: they depend totally upon their eyesight, for finding a whale. Locating a whale requires not only good eyesight, but also suitable weather conditions for spotting a whale in

Figure 10

Whalers in Search of a Whale



the sea. Because it is such an important and difficult task, a bonus system has been established in which individuals are rewarded with some cash for each whale they find and shoot.

The core group is tightly unified through their daily activities during the whaling season. Crew members meet on the boat early in the morning and start their day by sharing breakfast that Makanai, a cook, prepares for them. After careful examination of the weather and ocean conditions, the crew decide whether or not to go out whaling that day.

Figure 11

Whalers Sharing Meals on the Boat During the Whaling Season

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When the weather is not appropriate, they leave the boat and go home. Otherwise, they start off for the whaling ground around six o'clock in the morning (Hokkaido Shinbun, 1985, 4/22). They whale approximately 90 days during the six month whaling period. After the day's work, the crew go home when the boat is anchored in Abashiri. When whaling is operated elsewhere, for example near Monbetsu or Kushiro (see the map in Diagram 4), all the crew stay overnight on the boat in the harbor.

Figure 12

Evening Pastime on the Boat

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Such intimate group interaction inevitably closely unites the core whaling group. Moreover, these 'group' social activities continue through the non-whaling season:

> We visit each other quite often and take part in formal functions such as parties, weddings and funerals. We maintain the close relationship throughout the year.
> (Field notes, 1986)

The feeling of belonging to a certain group and the effort to maintain the group unity are of great significance in Japanese culture. Nakane states:

> In group identification, a frame such as a 'company' or 'association' is of primary importance; the attribute of the individual is a secondary matter.
> (Nakane 1973:3)

To summarize, the smallest unit in the whaling community in Abashiri consists of Oyakata and eight crew members on a boat. The jobs for each crew member are defined so that the core whaling group functions most efficiently in the whaling operation. However, the crew cooperate with each other on the boat once the operation starts. (Personal Communication, Dr. J. Takahashi) Discussion on group interaction during the whaling operation requires further investigation.

2. Whaling Community

In addition to those in the core whaling group who catch the whale, some others are involved in the process which ensures that the whale products reach the market. The factory workers and office workers are physically involved in the whaling by taking responsibility for work done off the boat. The families of the core whaling group as well as factory workers and the office workers should also be included in the whaling community, for they are not only economically dependent

upon the whalers but are also part of the religious life (see Chap. V, C) of the whalers. Thus, the Abashiri whaling community which includes two minke boats can be summarized in the following figure:

Figure 13

A Whaling Community in Abashiri

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">families</td><td colspan="2">Minke boat 1.</td><td colspan="2">Minke boat 2.</td><td rowspan="4">families</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Oyakata</td><td colspan="2">Oyakata</td></tr>
<tr><td>8 crew members</td><td>2 office workers</td><td>8 crew members</td><td>2 office workers</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>6 factory workers</td><td></td><td>6 factory workers</td></tr>
</table>

The office workers support Oyakata by sharing the responsibilies for book-keeping and marketing, whereas the factory workers work at the final stages of processing a whale. In the past, when a whale was flensed in the factory, the workers there had more work to do and flensing specialists were hired in the factory. However, now that the whale brought into the factory is already cut into blocks on board the boat, the factory workers are mainly involved in cleaning and boxing so that the whale meat is ready for shipping. This job is suitable for elderly people; therefore, it tends to attract retired whalers, who live on a pension and do the light part-time work on a casual basis.

The families are also an important part of the whaling community for two major reasons. One is that they are economically dependent on

the members of the whaling community. Another, and more important reason, is that they are part of the religious dimension of whaling. This aspect will be discussed further in a later chapter (Chapter V, C-1). However, one important fact needs to be discussed here. The involvement of wives in whaling seems to be limited to the area of religion. That is, physical work in hunting whale is done exclusively by the core whaling group who are all men. Moreover, it is rare to find the wives of whalers working in the whale factory. The wives often get jobs in areas other than whaling-related work. Most of the whalers who were interviewed stated,

> Our wives do not work in the whale factory and never on the boat. It sounds funny but I don't know any wives who work together with their husbands.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

Thus, there appears to be a clear division of labor between whalers and their wives in the Abashiri whaling community.

3. A Whaling Community and Dependents

The whale products are all consumed within Hokkaido, with Abashiri being the major market. The marketing system for whale differs from that for other fishery products. Whale products are sold to retailers through wholesale dealers outside of the control of the local fishery association. At present 5 wholesale dealers and 144 retailers are handling the whale products in Abashiri. Minke whalers are the only group who operate their marketing directly through wholesale dealers. Thus, both wholesale dealers and the retailers depend, to a great extent, on the core whaling group. In the whaling community in Taiji, one of the traditional whaling towns in Honshu, there exists a strong indication of social/cultural dependency on whaling among the

retailers and the wholesale dealers. (Personal communication, Dr. J. Takahashi).

In conclusion, the whaling community in Abashiri consists of a core whaling group, factory workers, office workers, and their dependent families. The core whaling groups are directly involved in the whaling operation. The factory workers are involved in processing the whale product; and the office workers, wholesale dealers and retailers do the marketing. Oyakata takes an overall responsibility for whaling operations from catching the whale to marketing it. Besides those who are engaged in the physical part of the whaling activity, there are families who share the religious life of the whaling community. The role of each of the members is defined, and the whaling community remains cohesive and discretely defined in the larger local community of Abashiri.

V. Cultural Role of Whaling in the Whaling Community

A. Major Annual Events

Acquiring a full understanding of the complex community relationships involves an analysis of numerous data presented by the members of the community. One way to gain such understanding may be through an analysis of the annual events that the community members regard as important. During interviews, the whalers and their family members listed several important events connected to their whaling activities.

New Year's day:

- The whalers start a year with their ceremonial whale dish called Kujirajiru, vegetable soup cooked with blubber. Wives prepare a big pot of this soup a few days before New Year's day and a small portion is heated each time it is served.
- Nenshi: a visit to Oyakata is of great importance for the whalers. Through the exchange of New Year's greetings, they renew the close relationship for the year. They usually take a new Year's gift on this occasion.
- Hatsumode: a visit to a local Shinto shrine is another important activity on New Year's day. This is done individually to offer prayer asking for a good harvest and health.

Before the beginning of the whaling season:

Oyakata and the crew members hold a Shinto ceremony conducted by a priest for safe whaling and a good hunt. In the past, it was customary for all the whalers to go to

the Abashiri Shrine for the season-opening ceremony. Now, a Shinto priest is invited to the boat and conducts the ceremony on the boat.

During the whaling season:

- Each time a whale is caught, a portion, cut from the last three centimeters of the tail, is offered to a god by placing it at the Shinto altar on the boat.
- Salt and uncooked rice are offered at the altar all the time. Azukigohan, cooked rice with red beans, is prepared to be offered to a god once a week. (This has been practiced until recently.)
- Chugen: Whalers and their families present mid-year gifts to each other. Whale meat is often given to the non-whaling group.

End of the whaling season:

- Oyakata holds a season-ending feast to which all the whalers, factory workers, office workers and their families are invited.
- Until recently, a Buddhist ceremony for the repose of whale spirits was held by Oyakata and the crew when the whaling season ended. Now, this ceremony is carried out individually rather than in a group.

End of the year:

- Seibo: year-end gifts are presented to each other as a token of appreciation for the year. It is customary that all members of the crew present Seibo to Oyataka and the other crew members if needed. They also present

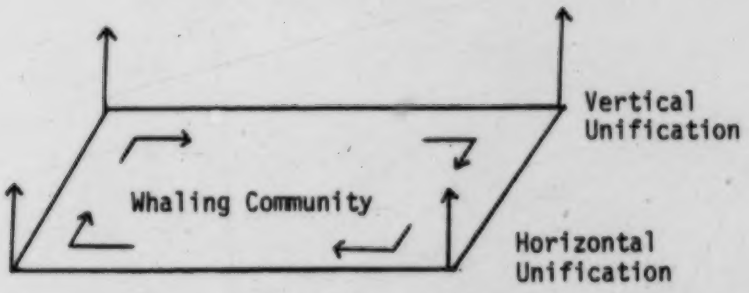
a gift to those who are outside of the whaling community, such as relatives, friends and neighbors. Whale meat and blubber are one of the most popular items given to the people outside of the whaling community.

Below, an attempt is made to analyze these events in order to understand their functional roles in the whaling community. As a result, the important events that most of the members in the whaling community listed can be roughly divided into two major groups: 1) activities which function to unify the people within the whaling community, as well as binding the whaling community to the outside community, and 2) activities which function to tie the whaling community to their spiritual world. Functional classification will be used as a basis for understanding the culture of the whaling community.

The first group of activities will be termed "horizontal unification" in which people strengthen their relationships within the whaling group and with the outside community. The second group of events can be termed "vertical unification" in which the members of the whaling community establish closer relationships with their spiritual higher being. The following diagram summarizes the two distinct functional roles of the ceremonial activities in the whaling community.

Figure 14

Functional Role of the Annual Events



Horizontal unification is achieved through gift exchange, visits to each other and sharing of the ceremonial dishes with others. On the other hand, vertical unification is achieved through ceremonies involving religious rituals, such as Shinto ceremonies and Buddhist prayers. Observing traditional beliefs, including taboos, is another way for the individual to reinforce the vertical unification (see Chap. V. C-1). Hatsumode, a visit to the shrine on New Year's day, is an example of such reinforcement when whalers give offerings and pray in front of the Shinto altar in order that the gods will reward them with a good year.

B. Horizontal Unification

Through interviews with both whalers and non-whalers in Abashiri, it became evident that the whaling community functions as one social unit bound by a complex of work activities, customs and religious beliefs. The wife of an old whaler stated,

> Whalers are like one big family. My husband, because he was a Hoshu, used to care about the well-being of the other whalers. Wives also visited each other as often as they could.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

A unifying force in the community seems to be generated by different behavioral rules which have been fostered by the members of the whaling community. In this chapter, some of the shared activities and rules which act to unify the group horizontally are discussed: 1) a training system, 2) the gift-exchange custom, and 3) whale as a food resource.

1. A Training System

The core whaling group, the smallest unit in the whaling community, is strongly bound by a training system in which a young whaler-to-be serves an apprenticeship with the experienced whalers. Mr. Oonishi, a Hoshu, explains:

> I grew up in a whaling village and started to work on a whaling boat as a sailor in Abashiri. I became a head sailor after three years. After ten years of working on a whaling boat, I became Hoshu.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

This lengthy process starts when a person is a young child. Children in the area grow up socializing with the whalers, and some are allowed to go onto the boat when anchored in the harbor and eat with the whalers. Mrs. Maeda, a wife of the late Hoshu and a mother of two whalers, tells about her sons when they were little:

> Two of my sons, now both whalers, loved visiting their father on the boat. They spent hours and hours playing around the boat and dreamt to be whalers just like their father.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

The socialization with the whalers seems to leave a signficant effect on the children. It is evident that the skilled whalers come from a family with a whaling tradition. That is, the skilled whalers have relatives who are also whalers.

The next stage occurs when a person starts working on the whaling boat. He is first hired as Makanai, a cook on the boat. While he works as a cook, at least for two or three years, he is expected to establish a trainer-trainee relationship with the other whalers. This is the basic requirement for a whaler. In whaler's terms, he establishes Ketsuen, a kinship with the senior whalers. Although the members of the core whaling group are not necessarily blood-related, they are apparently bound by an established kin-like relationship. One evidence is found in their use of the term Oyakata which literally means "parent figure". Such kin-like relationships are called Oyakata (parent) - Kokata (child) relationships, Oyabun-kobun being Nakane's term (1973), and are significant in Japanese society. Nakane explains:

> The relationship between two individuals of upper and lower status is the basis of the structural principle in Japanese society.... The traditional Oyabun-Kobun relationship took the form of patron and client, landowners and tenant, for example, or master and disciple.
> (ibid:44)

Oyakata, being socially superior to Kokata, provides help and protection to Kokata. In return, Kokata offers service to Oyakata when needed. Such reciprocity is not expected to be balanced in quantity but is assured by the mutual trust between Oyakata and Kokata (Yanagita, 1937; Kitano, 1976).

Once the man is accepted as a member of the kin-like group on the boat, he receives training under the senior whalers. A promotion takes place when Hoshu, Sencho and often Oyakata agree to give him a certain job responsibility. They judge the trainee's ability and promote him to a suitable job position so that he can further develop his ability to be a mature whaler. However, the situation is rather different at present; because there are only two minke boats in the

area, a job opening is an even more important factor in being promoted than is the person's ability.

Becoming a Hoshu takes a natural ability to fire a harpoon with perfect timing under pressure. Moreover, he has to be a person with profound leadership skills to be able to lead a crew during the whaling operation. Those who have these qualities will be recognized and become Hoshu. The others will take up other job responsibilities after some years of experience on the boat. The ability of the Hoshu decides the success of the hunt to a large extent.

A core whaling group was traditionally recognized as Kujiragumi, a whaling group, during the net whaling period. Due to the technical complexity and the size of the crew involved in the net whaling activity, Kujiragumi was more strictly governed by the training system and the written rules restricting the behavior of the whalers (Fukumoto, 1978:111). In modern whaling, such as minke whaling in Abashiri, similar social rules, although unwritten, exist to maintain unity among the members of the core whaling group. An old whaler claimed whalers are good, kind people

> because we teach the young whalers do's and don'ts. If he drinks too much, we tell him to get off the boat. We do not want those kind of people on the boat.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

In short, a group unity is enforced and maintained through the training system which has been established among the whalers on the Minke boats.

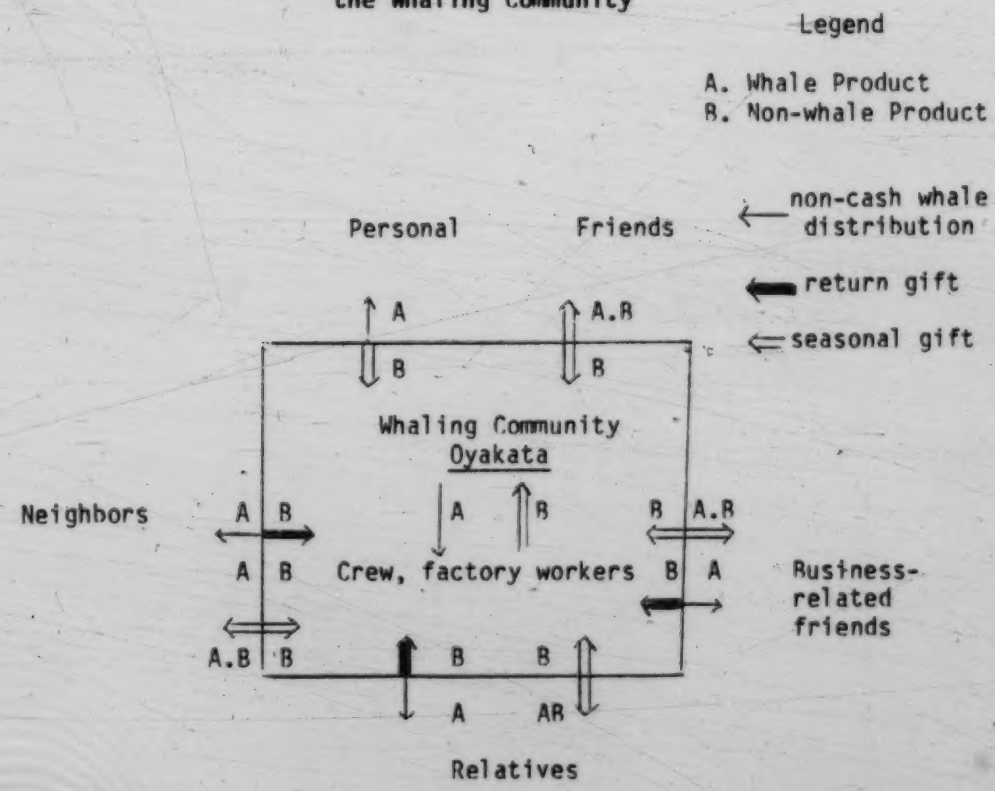
2. Gift Exchange

a. Whale in Gift Exchange Custom.

The members of the whaling community practice the complex system of gift exchange throughout the year. Often, they choose whale meat or blubber as a gift item. The following diagram illustrates the mechanism of reciprocal gift exchange within the whaling community as well as with the outside community.

Figure 15

Reciprocal Gift-Exchange Custom in the Whaling Community



It appears that whale products are distributed through two types of gift exchange systems: 1) non-cash whale distribution, and 2) seasonal gift giving. Further examination clarified the mechanism and the role of such gift-exchange in the whaling community.

1) Non-cash Whale Distribution

Besides a cash payment, whalers and factory workers receive fresh whale and blubber, as well as baleen for making artistic crafts, when a whale is caught. According to one Oyakata, a block of whale meat and blubber is shared among the whalers and the factory workers each time a whale is caught. He explains:

> It is a custom among us, although it is done differently on different boats, that we share what we caught on that day. It is fair that the whalers get what they hunted. The workers in the factory get their share as many of them come to work because they get to eat fresh whale. If a whaler wants to give some to his friend, he will come to me asking for more. I give them as much as they want.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

The distribution of whale meat presents an interesting pattern. Whale meat and blubber are distributed first among the members of the community and then to the people outside the community. The non-cash distribution ensures more harmonious interpersonal relationships within the whaling community. Moreover, it helps to generate a reciprocal gift-exchange system with the outside community. Some of the non-whalers, during the interview, said,

> We appreciate fresh whale we receive from the neighbor during the whaling season. If we get enough to share with others, we give some to other neighbors. We do give something special back to the whalers when we have them, things like freshly picked apples or fish that I catch.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

In this case, gift-exchange is completed with the return gift. However, in other cases, no material gift is reciprocated. For example, the coach of the baseball team receives some fresh whale when a whaler picks up his son, a member of the team. The baseball coach is not expected to return a gift but to take better care of the son. The relatives of the whaler who live nearby also receive their share.

In general, non-cash distribution of whale is carried out in a casual manner, the idea being to share the harvest. Kinship is not of primary importance in such distributions; rather, intimacy and physical distance appear to function as a determining factor in non-cash whale distribution.

2) Seasonal Gift

More formalized whale distribution is observable in the custom of seasonal gift giving. In such gift-exchange, cash may be involved in transition of the gift item. Some people buy whale meat and blubber at the store or from Oyakata. Among the gifts received from the whaling community, whale products are the most popular items to be distributed to people outside the whaling community. For Seibo, a year- end gift, and for Chugen, a mid-year gift, the members of the whaling community are expected to give whale products such as whale meat and salted blubber. In return, the people outside of the whaling community give items other than whale products. Mrs. Maeda said,

> I have relatives in Yoichi where people have to have Kujirajiru for New Year's. Every year they wait for me to send them some salted blubber. My son, a whaler, buys me some from Oyakata so that I can send it to my relatives. (Field notes, 1986)

One Oyakata explains, "We pack red and white meat (whale meat and blubber) in boxes and send them to relatives and friends for Seibo and

Chugen every year."

The seasonal gift-exchange appears to be more formalized than the non-cash distribution of whale in which whale is casually shared by intimate friends and relatives. In the seasonal gift-exchange, the gift is presented to reinforce the existing tie with the person or group. For example, the whalers send a seasonal gift to the relatives who are the important people in his social relationships. They send Seibo, a year-end gift, to their Oyakata because they want to strengthen the relationship. In the case of business-related friends, the whalers express their appreciation for the benefits they get from the business ties through seasonal gift giving.

Interestingly, the custom of such gift giving takes place just before two major celebrations: Obon, a Buddhist festival, and New Year's day. Thus, it is most appreciated if the members of the whaling community present whale meat and blubber to be used for the festivities. In short, non-cash distribution and seasonal gift giving are significant in the reciprocal gift-exchange system within the local community. Moreover, being the most appreciated by the people, whale meat and blubber generate the flow of the exchange.

b. Gift Exchange as a Means of Maintaining Social Unity

In Japanese society it is an established custom to reciprocate gifts as an expression of appreciation, respect and sympathy. Besides casual gift giving, people have developed a system of seasonal gift giving: Seibo, Nenshi and Chugen. Seibo is a year-end gift, Nenshi is a New Year's gift and Chugen is a mid-year gift. Casual gift giving may take place at any time of the year. For smoother interpersonal

relationships, people must be aware of the details of the gift-giving rules accepted by the community to which they belong. Harumi Befu describes the Japanese gift-giving system as

> ... a minor institution in Japan with complete rules defining who should give to whom, on what occasions he should give, what sort of gift is appropriate on a given occasion, and how the gift should be presented.
>
> (1968:445)

Johnson uses the term "Kosai", meaning the systematized reciprocal gift-giving which functions as a formal, concrete representation of the individual's social network (1974:296). Gift exchange, no doubt, has been a focal point of anthropological work aimed at understanding the social mechanisms of the society. Other anthropologists regard exchange as a form of social communication. Therefore, the social network functions to establish a link between social resources such as access to labor, skills and products and natural resources (Wilmsen, 1972).

Many attempts have been made to examine social exchange within the anthropological framework. One such workable theoretical framework is the typology of social exchange: balanced exchange[7], the type of exchange which involves the expectation of a direct material return, vs. generalized exchange[8], the type of exchange in which the reciprocation of the gift is not expected (Sahlin, 1965). Befu, modifies the Sahlin's typology and states, "These are ideal types, with many transactions falling somewhere between the two" (1974:602). According to Befu, it is understood that modernization enforces the tendency toward more balanced social exchange. However, as an exercise of power at the present time in Japan, it is an expense rather than a reward to the power holder (1974:603). Thus, the one-sided transfer of resources from the power holder to his subordinates becomes an

important factor in the analysis of modern Japan. Befu discusses particularly the phenomena of paternalistic bureaucracy (ibid:608) and academic paternalism (ibid:612). Befu concludes his discussion:

> Because of the tendency for Japanese to define human relations on particularistic and functionally diffuse grounds, numerous exchanges they engage in tend to be of "generalized" type rather than of "balanced" type in Sahlin's term.
>
> (ibid:620)

Befu's argument appears salient in that the exchange of resources and material is not balanced in quantity between the power holder and his subordinates. Quantitatively the return gift from the subordinates is significantly less than what the power holder has offered. However, Befu seems to overlook another significant aspect of Japanese social exchange. Formality in gift-exchange plays a role in adding extra value to the gift item and in setting a framework for the gift flow. In seasonal gift-giving, it is a common practice for subordinates to send a gift, which is wrapped appropriately, to their superior in return for the benefits that they received in the past. However, this situation is never reversed except for a special reason. For Chugen, Seibo, and Nenshi, the subordinate is expected to present a gift with the socially-defined formality, which increases the value of the gift significantly. Through such formalized gift-giving, the subordinates are able to return the favor of the gift in order to assure and reinforce the relationship.

To further investigate the aspect of formality in social exchange, gift-exchange in the whaling community will be examined. As mentioned earlier, two sets of whale product distribution operate in the reciprocal gift-exchange custom: 1) non-cash whale distribution, and 2) seasonal gift-giving. Non-cash whale distribution

is characterized by the lack of formality in the manner of presentation, highly intimate interaction between the sender and the recipient and the least emphasis on the prompt return obligation. In seasonal gift-giving, the senders are aware of the rules governing such exchange: the specified time, the appropriate wrapping, the suitable item and the appropriate recipient. The members of the whaling community distribute available whale products to their intimate friends and relatives at any time, in a fairly casual manner. However, for a seasonal gift, they wrap the whale product appropriately and present it at the specified time to those who are socially superior, or equal to them and have benefitted the whalers in the past.

Thus, in Sahlin's term, non-cash whale distribution may represent more generalized reciprocity, whereas the seasonal gift-giving may be a more balanced type of exchange. Furthermore, these two types of exchange function interdependently to complete the whole system of social exchange in the whaling community. The following diagram, based on the scheme proposed by Johnson (1974), illustrates the integrated system comprised of the two types of gift-exchange.

Figure 16

Mechanism of Gift-Exchange Custom

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(originally proposed by Johnson, 1974:302)

Less formal whale distribution is carried out with the more intimate and sociable members of each recipient group; these include relatives, business-related friends, private friends and neighbors. In such distribution the prompt return of a gift is not emphasized (generalized type). On the other hand, seasonal gift-giving operates between a member of the whaling community and those who are socially superior, or equal and require a return for a past favor (balanced type). These two types of exchange work through the screening process in which the decision is made whether the relationship with each member of the recipient group requires reinforcement through seasonal gift-giving. That is, a person examines the past gift-exchange practices with a particular partner and determines whether presentation of a seasonal gift for the purpose of measuring and reinforcing the relationship is necessary. In summary, the mechanism of the gift-exchange system in the whaling community is composed of two types of

reciprocity: generalized and balanced. The generalized type of gift-exchange is evaluated through the screening process and is reinforced, if necessary, by the balanced type of gift-exchange. Through such a procedure, distribution of the whale products maintain smooth, personal relationships within the local community.

3. Whale as a Food Resource

The taste of whale meat and blubber brings back old memories to most of the Japanese people who experienced the period of food shortage between 1940 and 1960. The smell of pan-fried gingered whale coming out of the kitchen used to signal to the children on the street that supper was ready at home. Although there are other kinds of meat available at a reasonable price at present, many Japanese have a strong, nostalgic attachment to the taste of whale. In this section, the mechanism of how people choose particular food, namely whale meat and bubber among the Japanese, will be examined.

a. Whale Dishes

Early archaeological evidence indicates that the Japanese ancestors long benefitted from the whale's resources. Whether they used the whale as food has not been answered in scientific terms. However, it would be difficult to believe that they wasted the abundant meat and blubber obtainable from the whale. Rather, it may be safe to conclude that they acquired the taste for whale quite early.

The most convincing evidence dates from the 16th century when whale dishes were served in the Imperial Court. Starting in the Edo era, the prime period of traditional whaling commenced first with the hand harpoon method and later adopted net-whaling along with the hand

harpoon. During this period, whale was extensively appreciated as a food source by the common people, and whale dishes were improved and developed into an every-day menu for the Japanese. An appreciation of whale as a food apparently has a long tradition in Japanese history. Moreover, it has been an underlying force in enriching and fostering a whaling culture in many areas in Japan.

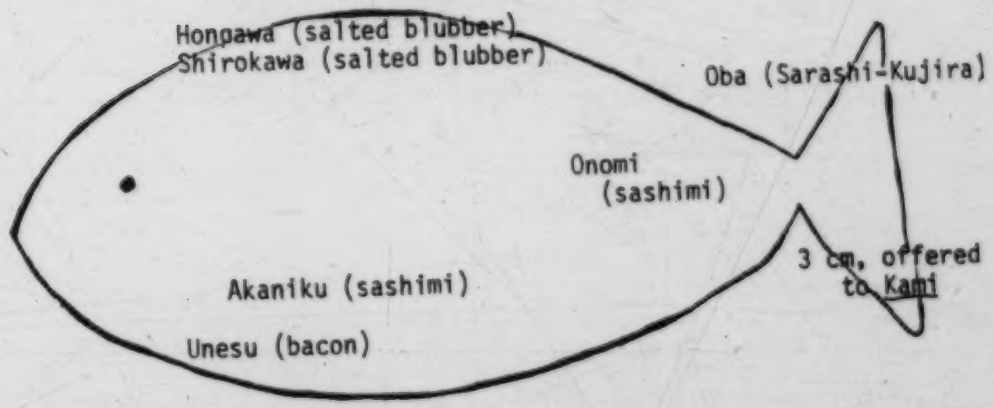
In the Abashiri area, whale was most extensively used for food from the 1930's to 1960's during which period an economic imbalance caused by World War II created serious food shortages throughout Japan. Some local people recalled their life at that time and said, "If it was not for whale, a lot of us would have starved to death." They used all parts of the whale for a variety of different purposes. They extracted oil from blubber and used it for lighting and cooking and for making soap. Shoes and bags were made with whale skin, and the intestines of whales were used for making tennis rackets. Needless to say, whale meat was cooked to be served at dinner. As for whale dishes, a book, Selection and Cooking of Fishery Products in Hokkaido, introduces ten different ways of cooking whale (1955:141). The variety of ways in which Abashiri people prepared popular whale dishes is listed below:

Kujirajiru	- a vegetable soup cooked with blubber
Kujira kasujiru	- a vegetable soup cooked with blubber and sake paste
Kujira misoni	- whale meat cooked with soybean paste
Kujira curry	- curry cooked with whale meat
Kujira komiage	- deep fried gingered whale
Kujira yanagawazuke	- pickled whale
Kujira misozuke	- boiled whale meat marinated in soybean paste
Sarashi Kujira	- sliced whale tail with mustard sauce
Irikawa misoshiru	- cooked blubber after oil is extracted, eaten in a soybean paste soup
Irikawa oden	- cooked blubber after oil has been extracted, prepared with vegetables

Around 1960, when the food shortage was eased, other kinds of meat became available and whale meat started to lose its popularity. At present, most whale meat is eaten as Sashimi, raw. The most tasty part, Onomi, is served with Sushi, rice ball with raw fish on top. The following diagram illustrates the use of whale meat at present.

Figure 17

Whale Dishes; Names of Parts (Names of Dishes)



A large amount of whale meat is currently eaten raw as Sashimi. Whale bacon and Sarashi kujira, sliced tail, are also popular among the local people. Blubber is traditionally salted and preserved to be used for a ceremonial dish called Kujirajiru, which is prepared as a New Year's dish and is considered indispensable in this particular celebration for many people throughout Hokkaido.

The whalers have their own style of preparing a whale dish. All the whalers who were interviewed stressed that they do not waste any part of the whale and that each part of the whale tastes different and is, therefore, cooked in the way that tastes best. One whaler stated,

> We never get tired of eating whale. How can I describe the whale taste? It has warmth in the taste that attracts men. Whale has such delicate taste.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

b. Theoretical Framework for the Study of Food

Food and food habits play an important role in our lives, both for our physical survival and for our cultural continuity. Food habits are "the product of the group's present environment and past history" (Lourenberg, et al, 1974:120). Every group of people has engaged in a distinct and complex system of ingesting the available food resources. Moreover, some aspects of food habits appear to be maintained despite the changes that a community experiences:

> The mark of the immigrants is left on the food habits in every one of the fifty U.S. states. Kolachies from Bohemia are found in parts of Iowa; limpa, lutefish and lefsa, as well as lingon berries from Scandinavia are common in Minnesota; chili con carne from Mexico is found in Texas; the French bouillabaisse is found in New Orleans; and German sausages are served in Pennsylvania. Some of these foods now are considered almost native to these regions.
>
> (ibid:121)

An attachment to certain kinds of foods or dishes is evident in the fact that each ethnic group has incorporated its preferred dishes into the new food habits which become established in the new environment.

Katona-apte (1975) discusses dietary aspects of acculturation by introducing an example of a minority group, the Marathi-speaking group living among the Tamil speakers. After a careful examination of their food pattern, he concludes:

> a) the daily eating habits have become more like those of Tamil speakers; b) certain aspects of the old culture diet which are suitable to the food habits of the new-culture have been retained; c) also retained are the old-culture habits of food preparation and consumption for the cele-

> bration of festivals from the old-culture; and d) the most significant degree of assimilation has occurred with regard to food habits during fasting.
>
> (ibid:325)

One of the points Katona-apte makes in his conclusion is that food preparation for the celebration of festivals was retained, despite the assimilation in daily eating habits. Apparently, important activities such as festivals have been preserved along with the ceremonial dishes because of their significant cultural value.

The above two examples may be enough to convince us that the mechanism of intentional food selection operates in the process of dietary change and that cultural values serve as a major impetus in the selection process. Furthermore, Back states that food selection "is most intimately connected with the definition of identity" (1977:30). In other words, people identify themselves by what they eat.

How, then, does culture affect food selection? According to Rozin (1982), the biological bases for making inferences are provided to an individual and then become incorporated into culture. Lastly, the culture reintroduces the biological features of the human food to individuals. For example, biologically, humans have an intimate preference for sweets, presumably for nutritional energy value (Biology). They discover sweet foods and sweetener (Individual). The sweet foods and sweetener are incorporated into cuisine. Thus availability of sweets is increased through agriculture, and institutionalization of technology further improves the process of refining and developing artificial sweeteners (Culture). An individual is introduced to the sweets and selects them because he/she likes them (Individual) (Rozin, 1982:229). Ishige, in support of Rozin's

argument, states "Culture of course, has a profound effect on both the environment and physiology" (1981:13). He takes food taboos as an example and demonstrates how the physiological message of food preference which is sent to the brain is largely controlled by culture. In short, it is important to note that culture acts to screen the information presented by individuals and to meet their needs by incorporating this information. Moreover, an individual food selection at the final stage results from a passive exposure to particular food items. The dynamics of food selection are, in most part, controlled by the culture of the group.

Another study explored the more prominent factors in culture and individuals effective in food selection. Krondl and Lau (1982) refined the existing concept and established the framework for an analysis of food selection.

A set of food perceptions, which are the result of the social, cultural, psychological and physiological experiences of a person, function as a barrier between food availability and the decision to choose any food. Krondl and Lau examine each perceptual element and conclude that

> ... the social determinants of price, prestige and convenience of food are less important in the decision making process of food choice when compared to learned health belief (especially among the elderly) and flavor of foods. (ibid:149)

Figure 18

Cultural Anthropology Framework for Food Selection Study
(Krondl and Lau, 1982)

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Health belief, in their terms, refers to the cultural values which tell individuals what is important in their food habits. One example is the nutritional standards that people in urbanized western areas believe to be important. The nutritional concept affects people's decisions in food selection.

In summation, Krondl and Lau's research has revealed that the two elements in the perception of food items, health belief and flavor of foods, influence food selection more than the other elements and that price and convenience are of secondary importance.

c. Theoretical Application to the Whaling Community

Why do people eat whale when they have other meat to eat? This question is raised frequently by non-whale eaters. To answer this

question, a brief analysis of food selection dynamics is conducted using the cultural anthropology framework for food selection study proposed by Krondl and Lau.

During interviews with people in the whaling community as well as elsewhere the outside community in Hokkaido, it became clear that some people do not care for whale, but others find it indispensable in their diets. The members of the whaling community, naturally, prepare whale dishes more frequently than those outside. This may be explained by the availability of whale. However, the distribution of the people who presently prepare the ceremonial New Year's dish, Kujirajiru, shows a very interesting pattern. Most of the people in the whaling community eat Kujirajiru on New Year's day, but many others throughout Japan never fail to prepare it for the celebration. A newspaper reporter once wrote an article in (Hokkaido Shinbun) that Kujirajiru is no longer prepared for the New Year's celebrations. Within a few weeks, she received over thirty letters from throughout Hokkaido telling that they do cook it every year and that Kijirajiru is still an important part of their New Year's celebration. In Takikawa, a urban community in the central part of Hokkaido, salted blubber is sold at the local fish markets in December for the people who will prepare Kujirajiru for New Year's day. The saleslady at one of the fish markets indicated that the same group of people come back every December for the salted blubber. They are mainly people who have moved from the coastal area where whaling is or was carried out in earlier times. She said,

> The price goes up every year but they all buy it at any price. They just can't have New Years without Kujirajiru.
> (Field notes, 1986)

Krondl and Lau's diagram helps to explain the distribution

patterns of the Kujirajiru lovers. Because of its size, whale traditionally symbolizes good luck and superhuman power, therefore some people believe that they gain luck and power by consuming parts of these animals. Such belief apparently drives the people to choose whale dishes for their special celebrations. The association of Kujirajiru with New Year's day is so strong among those who live in the whaling community that they choose to prepare it even after they move to other areas. On the other hand, those who eat Kujirajiru for convenience and the price soon stop eating it because they lack the belief associated with the whale dish. Thus, the difference in reason for selecting Kujirajiru between these two groups originates in their perception of whale, through their belief in the positive attributes associated with the whale.

Taste is also a crucial factor in food selection. The members in the core whaling group, Oyakata and the crew, utilize various parts of whale in their whale dishes. Whether blubber or the intestines, each part is prepared in a way to enhance its taste. They say that non-marketable parts, such as the intestines, taste even better than meat and blubber if properly prepared. Responding to the rather naive question, "Why do you eat it?", The whalers replied,

> Because of the taste. There is such charm and warmth in the taste of whale that once you eat some, you want more. Whale is simply delicious. We cannot waste any part of it.
> (Field notes, 1986)

Such strong liking of whale is one of the reasons the people to continue to eat whale.

Another significant point concerning food habits needs to be

discussed. Apparently, distinct differences exist between the effect of a voluntary food change and a coerced food change. Various changes in a community affect food and food habits of the people over the years. However, human tolerance to food change seems to place a limit on the acceptance of new food introduced into the community. For example, Pollock examined the acceptance of food of western origin by an atoll community in the Marshall Islands. She concludes:

> Weighing up the risks and strategies of the two types of subsistence, locally derived and purchased foodstuffs, it is apparent that there are uncertainties in each sphere. However, with local food stuffs, the risks can be calculated with some degree of accuracy, whereas with purchased foodstuffs there are too many incalculables. The result is that new adaptations are added to old subsistence foods, not substituted for them.
>
> (1975:129)

Pollock states that a successful food change requires sufficient calculation of the risks which will occur as a result of the change. This way, the social mechanism to adapt becomes workable in order to accommodate the consequence. However, if the risk is too high or incalculable, there is more chance that the food change fails.

The degree of risk that is associated with a voluntary food change greatly differs from that related to a coerced food change. Moreover, the calculation of the risks will be less accurate in the case of forced food change than of the voluntary food change. Awareness of these differences is important when considering the possible ban of the whale as a food resource. When the change is imposed on the community, their adaptive social strategy requires a high degree of tolerance and adjustment in their dietary habits. Thus, interference with whale as a food resource in the whaling community requires a thorough understanding of the social and cultural adaptive mechanism of the

community and a careful calculation of the risk involved in the food change. As Pollock concludes, the old subsistence foods will not necessarily be replaced by the newly introduced foods.

In conclusion, the selection of whale as a part of the diet is derived from an individual's perception of whale, which is largely influenced by that person's experience. In the case of whale dishes, the people's belief related to Kujirajiru and its association with the New Year's celebration enforces the tendency to continue preparing the dish for the celebration. Besides, members of the core whaling group continue to eat whale mainly because they have acquired a taste for the various parts of the whale. Moreover, the negative implications that result from coerced food change need to be considered carefully. For example, replacement of whale meat with other meat may involve a fundamental change in the adaptive dynamic relationship that depends upon food selection on the one hand, and the complex of social, cultural, psychological and physiological experiences of the people on the other.

C. Vertical Unification

Many groups of people who interact physically with nature in their everyday activities, often become involved with the religious dimensions as well. Japanese Fishermen, having a total dependence on nature have fostered a deep association with what they call Watatsumi, god of the sea (Katsuno, 1985:35). The image of Watatsumi takes a different form in each region or for each person. However, feelings of respect for, fear of, and reliance on the natural power which governs the sea are common to fishermen throughout Japan. Whalers in Abashiri are no exception: frequent communication with

Kami and Hotoke is considered important by the whalers and their wives in the whaling community. The wife of a deceased Hoshu said,

> I used to go to the Shinto shrine and Konkonsan (fox god) every time I needed help. If my husband did not catch a whale for a long time, I went to the shrine asking for help and went back there for thanksgiving when a whale was caught. I am sure that kami-sama, gods, let us catch whales. Thanks to kami-sama.
> (Field notes, 1986)

Kami-sama, in her terms, refers to the spiritual power which governs and controls the sea where her husband worked. As clearly stated in the above remark, the members in the whaling community have a strong belief that participation in religious practices greatly affects their whaling activities. Thus, rituals are held to maintain a healthy relationship between the whaling community and the religious world. Consequently, vertical unification is achieved through their religious practices.

1. Religious Life in the Whaling Community

A rich mixture of numerous belief systems appears to exist in the religious practices of the members of the whaling community. One old woman described her deceased husband, a competent Hoshu, as a man of religion:

> He was so religious that he practiced both Shintoism and Buddhism. He was also very superstitious (Meishnbukai) and observed all the taboos and was strict in keeping them.
> (Field notes, 1986)

This description typifies the religious life of the whalers in Abashiri. It may appear confused, however, what underlies their complex belief system is apparently a great respect for and fear of nature and its controlling power. The terms they use for this power are Kami and Hotoke, which literally mean gods and Buddha,

respectively. Kami and Hotoke are two versions of the same concept, the power that governs nature, and have many subdivisions such as ancestral spirits, a god of ocean traffic and the other gods whose power is concentration on a specific thing in nature. Kami and Hotoke are worshipped through different spiritual objects such as paper charms placed on an altar, a statue of Buddha, a monument for the repose of a whale soul, and others.

Whaling activity is closely tied to religious rituals, which are conducted both individually and collectively. At the beginning of the whaling season, the whalers get together on the boat and hold a ceremony in which a Shinto priest purifies the boat as well as the whalers so that they are pure enough to be accepted by Kami. The Shinto priest places a paper charm on an altar on the boat in order that the boat and the whalers will be protected and blessed with a good harvest. The whalers offer sprigs of Sakaki along with salt, rice and water to Kami during the ceremony. The ceremony marking the opening of the whaling season is of great significance as the whalers prepare themselves by strengthening their relationship with Kami.

Once whaling starts, the whalers and their wives individually worship Kami and Hotoke at home as well as on the boat. On the boat, there is a permanent offering of salt and uncooked rice at the Shinto altar. Until recently, Azukigohan (rice with red beans) was cooked and offered to Kami for thanksgiving once a week. Each time a whale is caught, the end of the tail (last three centimeters) is offered to Kami by placing it on the altar on the boat. One Oyakata explains:

> We offer a part of the tail to Kami thanking him/her for the catch. This is always done and should never be missed.
> (Field notes, 1986)

Whalers usually have both a Shinto altar and a Buddhist altar at home and often give offerings and pray in front of them. Some whalers have an honorific appellation specially made to repose the whale soul in their family Buddhist altar at home. Mrs. Maeda keeps such an honorific appellation which says "the repose of whale soul, Namuamidabutsu, the Maeda family". The whalers offer a Buddhist chant for the repose of the whale soul in front of the altar so that the whale soul will enter Nirvana just like the family ancestors do. Some whalers go to local shrines and temples to give prayers for Kami and Hotoke when they feel they need to do so.

Women play an integral part in their religious practice of Kami and Hotoke worship. Women often go to the local shrine asking for guidance and help. One woman stated that she used to go to Konkon-san, for help for whaling:

> Konkon-san used to tell me not to worry when I go there because my husband had not been back from whaling for a while. Other times, Konkon-san gives us a whale.... When my husband was not doing well, I went there and asked Kami to give us a whale.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

Another important ritual takes place at the end of the whaling season. The whaling crew used to hold a ceremony at the Buddhist temple for the repose of the souls of the whales they killed during the season. This ceremony is conducted individually at present in order to placate the whale souls to prevent calamity. There was a time when Oyakata, a boat owner, went to Hakodate to take part in the Buddhist ceremony for the repose of the whale souls, held in front of the whale monument in the local temple. Hoshu who were interviewed stressed that they cannot catch whales without a deep respect for and fear of

Kami and Hotoke. They may not hold rituals as often as they wish, but they are sincere in worship and in awe of Kami and Hotoke. Thus, they frequently pray by themselves.

The communication between the whalers and Kami and Hotoke is not limited to the whaling season but continues year round. Members of the whaling community take part in a festival at the local Shinto shrine in the spring and in the fall. Another important occasion is on New Year's day when people worship Kami both at home and at the local shrine. A priest of the Abashiri Shrine explains:

> We regard the beginning and end of events as the most important moment.... On New Year's day, we worship Kami so that we will be blessed with a good year. In the spring, we pray for a good season, and in the fall we thank Kami for a good harvest. At each occasion, we offer things from nature; from the sea, the rivers, the mountains and the farm.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

The members of the whaling community maintain their ties with Kami by participating in these local festivals and the New Year's visit during the off-whaling season.

The whalers observe taboos out of fear that Kami might cause a calamity as a penalty for breaking a taboo. However, the older whalers seem to take such taboos more seriously than the younger ones. "The young whalers probably don't even know about it," stated an old whaler. Some taboos involve women because it is believed they may affect whaling in a negative way. For example, no woman is welcome on the boat while whaling is in progress. Old whalers are nervous about any woman coming on the boat, even when it is anchored. The reason for this fear, as the whalers explained, is that a menstruating woman is thought to pollute the boat if she comes on board. One Hoshu said,

> When I was young I used to ask every woman visiting our

> boat whether she was menstruating or not. The elders on the boat were strict about it.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

Another taboo involving women is the avoidance of contact with child birth. If a whaler happens to be in the same house when his wife is delivering a baby, he is not allowed back on the boat for a certain period of time: a week for a baby girl and three days for a baby boy. The whalers concluded:

> So we stayed away from home when our wives were about to give birth and enjoyed bachelor life for a while.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

These taboos against women are commonly found among fishermen throughout Japan. They explain that the Kami of fishing boats, is female and that she is jealous if a woman is on the boat. At present, the whalers are not as rigid about the taboos against women as before. However, the whalers do not allow any woman, including a female researcher, to go whaling with them even now.

Other taboos include topics that the whalers will not discuss on the boat. Stories about cats, crows and snakes are considered bad luck as is telling a story about a monkey in the dawn. Some old whalers refuse to sail if such stories are told. A whaler recalls,

> You have to be specially careful when you are on someone else's boat. You don't want to upset the people by polluting their boat.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

Dropping a knife on the boat is also considered ominous: however, salt sprinkled over the knife before picking it up will purify it. Mrs. Maeda said,

> My husband was rigid about sprinkling some salt on the knife which was dropped even at home. He was very superstitious at home as well.
>
> (Field notes, 1986)

Religious life in the whaling community may appear confusing and irrational in comparison to the western or Christian dogmatic standard. However, the whalers and their wives seem to base their beliefs on animism and ancestor worship in which they relate themselves to Kami and Hotoke, authoritative beings in nature (Harada, 1976).

Harada explains animism in his discussion of nature and man:

> Natural phenomenon may appear irrelevant to the human life. However, in reality, it has been regarded more than what happens outside of the human life.... Nature has been understood to have its own will and motives just like humans do. Thus, nature's interaction with humans is significant in human life.
>
> (Harada, 1976:28)

The key issue in his discussion is that people personify nature and recognize its human-like character. Natural phenomena may be created by nature's anger or happiness. Such an animistic view is commonly found among Japanese fishermen (Nishimura, 1983). In the case of the Abashiri whaling community, such animistic elements are presently not as distinct as those found in the southern part of Japan (Shiba, 1986). Such a tendency is relevant to other fishing communities in Hokkaido. Yajima (1985:222) finds reasons behind the common phenomena in historical facts. Kami of fisheries was introduced to Hokkaido by the fishermen who migrated from the south in the eighteenth century. However, those who came to work in the fishing villages did not necessarily come from fishing villages. Rather, quite often the unsuccessful farmers who gave up farming moved to Hokkaido and became fishermen. Cosmology relating to farming with which those farmers had been familiar affected to a certain degree the original form of spiritual practice of the fishermen. Moreover, as a result of

Shintoism-Buddhism separation policy which came in full force during the Meiji Restoration, many such animistic shrines were assigned to function as regional shrines responsible for each jurisdiction. Thus, the Kami worship which had been fostered in the south has been gradually modified over the years.

The whalers in Abashiri often stated, during the interviews, that they do not pray to any specific Kami but to any Kami they believe in. Although the god who is enshrined in Abashiri Shrine is Ichikishimano-mikoto, the goddess of ocean traffic, it is difficult to conclude that all the whalers worship this particular goddess. As mentioned earlier, Konkonsan, the fox god, who is believed to preside over fishing activities is also worshipped by some whalers and their families. The degree of involvement of the whalers with any specific Kami requires further investigation.

Ancestor worship is another form of spiritual practice among the whalers. They use the term Kami and Hotoke in one phrase "Kam to Hotoke (god and Buddha)". Hotoke generally refers to the ancestral spirits who have an extensive power over the lives of living people. Hotoke, in their practices, includes the souls of the whales who gave up their lives for the whalers. The whalers pray not only for protection and the success of whaling activities but for the whale souls to join their ancestral spirits. Kami worship is closely associated with Shinto practice whereas Buddhism appears to be the basis for their ancestor worship.

To help understand the richness and complexity in the spiritual life of the whalers, general characteristics found in Japanese religious systems are discussed in the following section.

2. Religion in Japan

The complex nature of religion among the Japanese people needs to be discussed to further clarify the naturalistic fundamentals of the religious life in the whaling community. It is often said that many Japanese practice more than one religion at a time. For example, many Japanese homes have a Buddhist altar in one corner of the room and a Shinto altar in the other. Moreover, the same family will go to the local healer for counselling and healing. Another example is found in Hatsumode, a New Year's visit to a shrine. Most Japanese consider Hatsumode as a Shinto ritual. However, quite a few Buddhist temples receive numerous visitors for Hatsumode on New Year's day (N. Inoue, 1986:65). According to a western perspective, such a phenomenon may be considered a mixing of religions and therefore rather chaotic. A syncretism which characterizes the Japanese religion well explains such complexity in the religious practice. The syncretic nature of the Japanese religious system will be explained through two different approaches: an analysis of Shintoism and an analysis of Buddhism.

Inoue discusses religious syncretism, which formulated the spirituality of the Japanese people, by analyzing Shintoism. He explains:

> Modern Shintoism is made up of several elements: essential Shinto elements, Buddhist elements, Confucian elements, and Taoist elements. The problem in identifying the essential Shinto elements is found in a the syncretic nature of modern Shintoism. That is, you can take all the other elements from modern Shintoism, but what is left cannot be proved as an original form of Shintoism. In other words, a syncretized form of Shintoism is what Shintoism has developed to be. Thus, there is no such form as an original Shintoism or essential Shintoism.
>
> (N. Inoue, 1986:74)

Inoue continues to discuss that the Shinto fundamentalism[9] which started during the Meiji Restoration affected the people's religion only in the area of dogmatic interpretation. On a practical level, it never succeeded in creating a separation of Shintoism and Buddhism. Consequently, Shintoism and Buddhism have remained closely interwoven.

Inoue's argument is supported by Yamaoka in his examination of Buddhism. He builds his argument on the basis that Buddhism, after being introduced to Japan, was syncretized within the existing belief systems of animism, shamanism and ancestor worship. As a result, modern Buddhism is no longer what it used to be when first brought to Japan. He further concludes that Buddhism was accepted by the Japanese through the processes of the syncretic adaptation to the native religious systems. Moreover, the syncretic nature of Buddhism was never abolished even after the Shinto-Buddhism separation movement that occurred during the Meiji Restoration (Yamaoka, 1986:78).

N. Inoue and Yamaoka present an accurate picture of complex religious systems practiced by the Japanese. The religious life of the Japanese cannot be examined under simple labelling of each separate religion. Rather, it needs to be observed as a complex whole. This tendency is even strong among fishermen and whalers because of their animistic view which is fundamental in their religious life. The concept of Kami and Hotoke should be understood not through dogmatic interpretation of Shintoism and Buddhism, but as the medium by which whalers interact with nature.

VI. Ethical issues in whaling

A. Background of the ethical issues

Although whale management involves a number of issues, one of the most controversial is ethics. The Friends of the Earth organization, a typical environmental group with chapters in many western cities, provides three major arguments against whaling.

> 1) The morality of risking, or actually causing the extinction of species;
> 2) The humaneness of hunting techniques;
> 3) The ethical propriety of killing cetaceans.
>
> (1978:21).

The above three statements seem to comprise the common focal points of the argument of the anti-whaling movement. Scarff, elaborates on these points claiming that hunting whale and small cetaceans, which may cause the extinction of species, is immoral because whales and dolphins have a value significantly greater than the sum of their human uses (1980). Scarff's argument apparently rests on the assumption that the "intrinsic worth" of whales and dolphins should be recognized universally. Moreover, he maintains that this value can only be protected by the recognition of cetacean rights. Here, we face culturally-bound terms such as "value", "worth" and "rights", which present a problem in discussing the issue on a world-wide basis. Another aspect of this view is the identification of human benefit and animal welfare as the conflicting elements. This view reflects the western idea of human-animal relationships. In the view of many non-western societies, including the Japanese, human beings and animals are in an interdependent relationship so that the utilization of animals is recognized, in some cases, as a value of the animals themselves (Kayano, 1985). The first point in which Scarff

argues the moral issues raised by causing the extinction of species, is of prime concern for both anti-whaling groups and the whalers. However, care must be taken when discussing the conservation aspects of the whaling issue, because the biological data upon which such arguments are based are subject to dispute (Allen, 1980, Ichihara, 1978). According to Allen, a member of the scientific Committee of IWC:

> ... the best figures which we can use are little more than impressions based on the apparent frequency with which the animals are seen ...
>
> (1978:18)

In the case of the Okhotsk Sea-West Pacific stock of Minke whale, the scientific data indicates "even in the most conservative case" that this stock of Minke whale shows no sign of significant decline during the past 10 years. (Wada, 1986) Even if a consideration is given to the facts that accuracy of the biological data is questionable, the above statement suggests that a treatment of Minke whale as endangered species does not have a scientific base and requires more detailed and reliable scientific information of each stock in order to come to such a conclusion.

In relation to the second point that hunting techniques are inhumane, Scarff (1980:252) introduces the report submitted by a subcommittee of IWC and says that "The explosive harpoon is the most humane method presently available". His main argument here is the need to minimize the pain and suffering that the animals experience. The method which causes the animal least pain is considered humane, whereas the painful method is more inhumane. However, are pain and suffering viewed similarly, or as something to be avoided to the same extent or by the same means, in every culture?

The third point, cetaceans being sacred animals, may constitute the most controversial argument advanced by the supporters of whaling as well as anti-whaling activists. Scarff (1980:263) states that "The rights of whales are greater than those of other animals" because of their intelligence, social behavior, appealing personality, the uniqueness of their life style, and the sense of mystery that accompanies our ignorance of their natural history. His questionable point that cetaceans are more valuable than other animals contradicts what animal liberationists claim. Singer (1975) denies all human use of animal resources on the basis that loving your pet and eating beef at the same time is speciesism. In other words, living creatures on the earth are equal and require equal consideration. Although Singer's claim is an extreme one, his position and that of many who oppose human use of animals for a variety of purposes obviously contradicts Scarff's argument.

Viewing whales as sacred beings is not unique to the Greeks, as Scarff claims. Rather, it is a common view shared by most whalers, who are very aware of the whales' intelligence and behavior. Furthermore, they believe in souls of whales and practice a number of rituals to show their respect and concern for these spirits. In spite of the fundamentally similar attitude towards whales, anti-whaling groups in western countries and the whale hunters in Japan differ in their view of what constitutes appropriate treatment of whales.

The contradictory attitudes toward whale management held by the supporters of both whaling and anti-whaling interests may be explained through the discussion of two major factors: 1) human-animal relationship, and 2) the concept of animal rights.

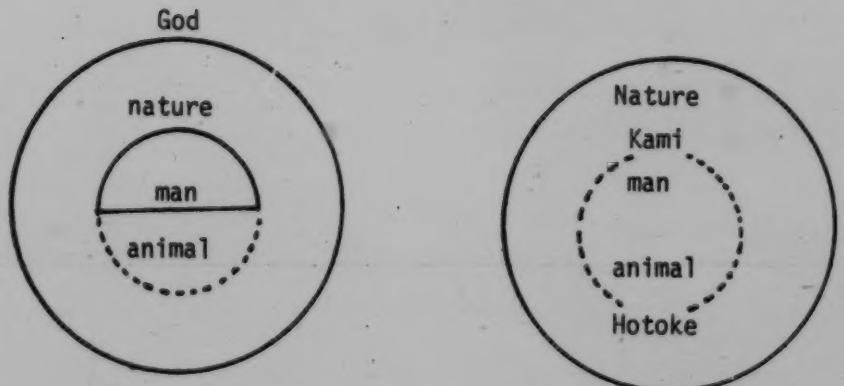
B. Human-Animal Relationship

What distinguishes the western, particularly urban-based, view of the human-animal relationship from Japanese views, is that the latter assumes an intimate interaction from an interdependency between humans and animals, whereas the Christian ideology assumes the opposite. Additionally, western animal liberationists who suggest replacing use of animals for food and other products with inanimate materials, nevertheless also differ from the Japanese position. That is, contrary to the Japanese, animal liberationists have not assumed interdependency between men and animals. On the other hand, in hunter and gatherer societies, a perceived interdependency between humans and animals remains strong, and spiritual communication is enforced because of the tie between them.

A simplified diagram explains the man-animal interaction and the differences in the urban westerners', and Japanese views.

·Figure 19

Human-Animal Relationship Model



The urban Western View

Japanese

In the western view, human existence is recognized as essentially separate from that of animals and nature.

This division between humans and animals in relation to their environment is plainly described in the Christian Bible. In Genesis, Chapter 7, God talks to Noah: "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for you alone in this age have I found to be truly just" (Genesis 7:1). The chosen one, Noah, signifies man's unique relationship with God. Among all the creatures on the earth, not only is man the recognized being, but he is given the authority to choose and take seven pairs of clean and unclean animals (Genesis 7:2). Figure 21 illustrates the independent relationship between man and animal which is apparent in God's order to Noah: to rescue the chosen, God orders Noah to go into the ark and to take a pair of each species with him (Genesis 7:7,8). During the Great Flood, they are protected in the ark from the heavy rain and the flood, which symbolize nature around them. The shelter of the ark may suggest man's separateness from nature. When the earth finally dried out, God blessed Noah, who let the animals and birds out of the ark, and said,

> Dread fear of you shall come upon all the animals of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon all the creatures that move about on the ground and all the fishes of the sea; - into your power they are delivered. Every creature that is alive shall be yours to eat; I give them all to you as I did the green plants.
>
> (Genesis 9:2,3).

This quotation clearly indicates that animals are subordinate to humans. In short, the chapter on The Great Flood in the Bible presents the underlying idea of the human-animal relationship in urban western ideology. This may be interpreted to mean that there is a distinct separation between men and animals.

The diagram of the Japanese view of the human-animal relationship illustrates the fundamentally different interaction between them. No barriers exist between humans and animals, and often not even between humans and nature, so that their interaction is on-going and intimate. Ideally, humans and animals share one spiritual universe which should harmonize with nature (Katsuno, 1985). The animism discussed earlier (see Chap. V. C-1) exemplifies such a human-animal relationship. Both humans and animals share a spiritual universe which results in a unified natural/supernatural world.

Another expression of the Japanese view of the human-animal relationship is found in Buddhism. Kanaoka summarizes the Buddhist view of the human-animal relationship by stating "Buddhism recognizes no distinction between human beings and other living things" (1987:121) in the sense that the lives and wellbeing of animals are regarded as equally important as those of human beings. Animals and human beings share the same spiritual value and live in the same spiritual universe. Furthermore, Kanaoka concludes: "Essentially, killing an animal is as significant as killing a man" (ibid:125).

> However, in order for you to live, you inevitably kill the others.... Thus, when you eat, you thank rice, wheat, vegetables and animals for giving up their lives for you. Pray that they will attain Buddhahood.
>
> (ibid:126)

Such a strong belief in the value of animal lives obviously differs from the idea of animal lives in the urban western ideology. A spiritual separation between humans and animals is marked clearly in the western view. Therefore, an interaction between them must involve in an intentional act such as an act of protection, an act of affection or an act of cruelty. On the other hand, respect for the

lives of animals is intrinsically imbedded in the Japanese view. Unlike the urban western interaction, humans and animals in the Japanese ideology are capable of benefitting from each other without creating serious spiritual conflict on either part because of the fundamental intimacy, equality, and resulting respect, which exists between them. Such different perspectives on the relationship of human beings with nature nature as well as with animals specifically, certainly create distinct and different ethical standards applied to whale management. A suggestion could be made that the ethical issue be considered in the framework of a non-western ideology or at least one that is respectful of this alternative perspective.

C. The Concept of Animal Rights

Based on the discussion of the human-animal relationships, the concept of animal rights is examined in an attempt to further investigate the problems inherent in the ethical issue of whale management.

In an interview with the CBC, a leading figure in Greenpeace, Patrick Moore (1984), repeatedly used the terms "ethics", "morality", and "animal rights" without defining them. In surveying the ethical issues involved in the human-animal relationship, it seems apparent that ambiguity is a common component in most of the arguments on this issue. Peter Singer for example, states that God created both men and animals to be equal; therefore, animals have the right to avoid pain and suffering. At the beginning of Animal Liberation (1975), he writes with such confidence, and yet the ambiguity of his argument is blatant to a non-western mind. Singer builds his argument on the following premise:

> The extension of the basic principle of equality from one group to another does not imply that we must treat both groups in exactly the same way, or grant exactly the same rights to both groups. Whether we should do so will depend on the nature of the members of the two groups. The basic principle of equality does not require equal or identical treatment; it requires equal consideration. Equal consideration for different beings may lead to different treatment and different rights.
>
> (1975: 3)

His fundamental assumption lies in the equality and the rights that an authoritative figure who is superior to both human beings and animals has granted us. This whole picture in which humans and animals are created and controlled by God appears to have a strong root in Christianity. Would this view be acceptable in other societies having a long history of animism or polytheism?

In hunting societies where animals are frequently hunted for subsistence, there exists a distinct notion of equality and rights of animals within the framework of the belief system. One example, drawn from the Ainu folktales, is told by Kayano (1985), who often heard popular tales during his childhood. "The Fox's Charanke" is a story about a fox who is accused by the villagers of stealing some salmon they had caught. He makes a charanke, or an appeal, to all the Ainu by saying that the salmon are to be shared equally among the Ainu and the animals and that he has the right to eat his share. As a result, the villagers are blamed for speaking ill of the fox and must make an apology with an offering to the fox god. Kayano concludes the story by saying,

> Therefore, children, not only the Ainu but also all the living animals can eat salmon and deer; they all have the same right as the Ainu have. So do not think salmon and deer belong only to the Ainu.
>
> (1985:66)

As shown in the story, the Ainu hunters recognize animal rights, as do the animal liberationists. However, the Ainu have their own distinct point of view, which is probably shared by most other hunting people (see Hersovici 1985:57-67, for the Cree Indian view). They believe that capturing animals is a blessing. That is, the gods of animals offer meat and fur to the Ainu, and the Ainu receive them, by killing them, and send the spirits of the animals back to the land of the gods. Such view is also shared by the whalers in Abashiri: Kami and Hotoke allow them to catch whales. Thus, maintain-ing a healthy spiritual life results in a good harvest. The notion of cruelty in Singer's discussion is replaced by blessings in the whalers' ideology.

D. Natural Rights as Basis for Animal Rights

What is the fundamental difference in the basis of two distinct views of animal rights? Godlovitch approaches the ethical issue based on the notion of natural rights:

> ... a logically necessary condition for something to be a moral right is that one presupposes another moral claim of great generality about beings - most importantly, the equal right to be free from constraint. This last principle is so rock-bottom that it has been called 'natural'.
>
> (1971:158)

Being free from constraint is the fundamental and inviolable right shared by all beings. Furthermore, her emphasis is that if humans have natural rights, then so do animals. Because natural rights are not conditioned, but given, not only humans but animals as well ought to be guaranteed this fundamental right (1971:161).

Godlovitch's point can be examined more thoroughly by discussing further the notion of natural rights. Fagothy calls natural rights

inalienable rights that God has given to all human beings through the natural law (Fagothy, 1975). Along the same line, Abbott defines natural rights as absolute, inherent, and fundamental rights (Abbott, 1901). Both Fagothy and Abbott seem to agree in their view of natural rights as not only universal but also fundamental for all human beings.

Another supporting argument is presented by Rodee. Natural rights, in his definition, are endowed by nature or by God to all human beings, regardless of race, creed, or color. He concludes that it is this right with which the state could not justifiably interfere (Rodee, 1957:189). Rodee recognizes natural rights as existing prior to the state; therefore, no authority can intrude upon fundamental natural rights.

What appears to be common to the definitions outlined above is the absolute authority of God, the creator of the earth and all beings. This superior power of God provides a validity to natural rights. This very authority makes natural rights inalienable, even by the state. In other words, natural rights are the fundamental and universal rights granted by God prior to the existence of the state; and because of the authority and the protection of God, natural rights are observed and guaranteed.

The view of natural rights as God-given, which is obviously influenced by Christianity, can be challenged by different religious views found in non-western societies. In the Christian view, all creatures are made to exist on the earth under one superior God. Human submission to and faith in God are rewarded by an eternal life in heaven. In contrast, and sometimes in contradiction, to the Christian view, there exist other views of the universal law. One example is

Confucianism in which the collectivity of a group is promoted. Thus, the contributions of an individual to a group are reciprocated by protection within a group (Bowen, 1982). That is, one absolute authority, such as God, is not recognized in Confucianism; therefore fundamental rights are earned by a contribution to a group. In the whaling community, the relationship with Kami and Hotoke is rather unsparing and intense. The whalers are not granted the natural right, in the western sense, of being free from divine constraint or physical punishment. Kami and Hotoke may take their lives for some failure in their spiritual devotion (Shiba, 1986:353).

These two examples suffice to show that the concept of natural rights is not likely to be recognized universally, because ideologies of traditional belief systems differ. Some religions lack the belief in one superior God who seems to provide the basis for natural rights. Acceptance of suicide, infanticide and sanctioned homicide in societies where natural rights are rejected provides concrete evidence in support of the above conclusion.

Godlovitch's approach to animal rights falls short by not explaining a logical base for animals to share natural rights with human beings. Furthermore, her argument appears to contradict the Biblical fact, although the principle of her argument is apparently based on Christianity. In Genesis, after God created man and woman in his image,

> God blessed them saying 'Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the bird of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth'.
>
> (Genesis 1:28)

In Godlovitch's argument, God, the very One who granted natural rights to man, did not create man and animals to be equal but assigned man to be in charge of the welfare of all other creatures. A clarification of this contradiction requires more detailed discussion, but the brief statement introduced above may be enough to indicate a flaw in her argument.

In summary, arguments about "morality" and "animal rights" are found to be ambiguous at least to a Japanese, and the origins for this lie in the differences between the belief systems of Christianity, and those of Japan.

VII. Conclusion

The field work was conducted in the Abashiri small-type whaling community in an attempt to investigate the cultural significance of their whaling activity. Five major areas were examined: 1) historical background, 2) the training system, 3) whale products in the gift-exchange system, 4) whale products as food resources, and 5) the religious dimensions of whaling activity. As a result, the whaling community was revealed to have distinctive features which originate within and are sustained by their whaling activities. Given this strong basis in tradition, should the Abashiri small-type whaling be considered as commercial whaling? In answering this question, we need to acquire some understanding of the definition of commercial whaling as opposed to aboriginal/subsistence whaling.

A definition of aboriginal/subsistence whaling is presented by an IWC ad hoc Technical Committee Working Group (1981), which describes this type of whaling as:

> Whaling for purposes of local aboriginal consumption carried out by or on behalf of aboriginal, indigenous, or native people who share strong community, familial, social and cultural ties relating to a continuing traditional dependence on whaling and on uses of whales.
> (IWC doc. 33/14, 1981, quoted in Hoel, 1985:88)

In this definition, (which conforms with that stated in a 1982 IWC document) the social/cultural aspect of whaling activity, especially the role of consumption of whale products for maintenance of the local community, is emphasized.

Through an examination of the above definition, it becomes clear that the classification of aboriginal/subsistence whaling is problematic and confusing. In the above definition provided in and apparently followed by the IWC, the emphasis is placed on an involvement of the indigenous or native people in both the consumption of whale and in whaling operations. On the other hand, the definition also includes the social and cultural importance of whaling and the people's dependence on whaling and whale resources. In many cases, these two requirements may not be met simultaneously. In other words, the element of "aboriginal" and the element of "subsistence" do not always coincide. For example, although the whalers in Abashiri are the descendents of the Japanese traditional whalers, they cannot be classified as native people because of the Ainu in Hokkaido. However, they are full-time whalers who depend totally on their whaling not only for economic reasons, but for a variety of cultural and social transactions within the community. In short, the definition apparently followed by the IWC is not satisfactorily applicable to the present situation.

There has been an attempt to further define aboriginal/subsistence whaling. Mitchell and Reeves (1980) conducted

an intensive study of the aboriginal whaling issue and found the terms "aboriginal" and "subsistence" to be problematic. Therefore, they redefine the necessary terms to ensure accuracy in their discussion (see Appendix 4). Although their definitions do not coincide with the IWC documents and were not adopted by the IWC, they are a very useful contribution to the study of this issue. Mitchell and Reeves neatly separate aboriginal whaling, non-aboriginal whaling, subsistence whaling, and commercial whaling. What distinguishes the four types of whaling appears to rely upon two questions: 1) localism, and 2) cash and non-cash economy.

The first point questions whether whaling is carried out by the local people in a locally-based whaling operation and whether whale is intended to be consumed as food locally. Abashiri whaling is obviously a locally-based operation with a significantly long history relative to the history of the settlement of Hokkaido from the south. The core whaling group is composed of full-time whalers all residing in Abashiri. Moreover, whale which is caught off shore of Abashiri is consumed only as food by people in Hokkaido (Suisancho, 1986).

Secondly, Mitchell and Reeves regard the issue of a cash/non-cash economy to be an important factor in determining aboriginal/subsistence, non-aboriginal and commercial whaling. This raises an interesting question: Should whaling that takes place in a community with a long tradition of using cash be regarded as a commercial whaling operation simply because of the cash involvement? In a country like Japan, fishery has long been operated through cash markets. According to a document dated 1692, from Japan:

> The fish was a cash crop, and the fishermen had to buy their staple food - rice. The fishing villages therefore, often operated as small market towns. (Kalland, 1978:31)

The Abashiri whaling community, being a part of the whale industry, inevitably takes part in the cash economy which is operated throughout the country. However, the value of whale goes beyond the monetary gains. As discussed in the chapter on gift-exchange customs, whale plays an important role in the community reciprocal gift-exchange system. Therefore, whaling in Abashiri involves both the cash economy and a very important non-cash whale distribution.

To return to the original question: Should small-type whaling be considered commercial whaling? This study has illustrated the on-going culturally and socially significant role of whaling in the community and the importance of non-cash whale distribution. In this regard Abashiri small-type whaling is seen to involve important elements ordinarily associated with subsistence whaling rather than commercial whaling.

In conclusion, this study of the whaling community in Abashiri demonstrates that whaling functions as part of an integrated socio-economic system governed by traditional practices such as the training system, gift-exchange, customary food and feast arrangements, and religious practices. All of those stem from whale procurement, distributive and consumptive activities. Thus, dependence on whaling, in the sense of cultural continuity, is extremely great in the local community and Abashiri small-type whaling does not fit in to the definition of commercial whaling. Rather, consideration should be given either to classifying it as subsistence whaling or to recognize that the existing categories of whaling used by the IWC are inadequate for the regulatory purposes for which they were originally intended.

NOTES

1. BWU - The total cash quota was set in terms of Blue Whale Units, which equal one blue whale, two fin whales, two and a half humpbacks, or six sei whales, representing the oil yield from three species. Sperm whales were not included in this scheme, since sperm whale oil has different industrial applications.

(Hoel, 1985:56)

2. Sustainable Yield Level

- The IWC agreed that the Antartic total quota should be reduced below sustainable yield of bulls over a three-year period, reducing the TAC to 4,500 BWU.

(Hoel, 1985:60)

3. Norwegian Whaling Technique

- Between 1863 and 1868, a Norwegian, Svenn Foyn developed a technique of using cannons to shoot harpoons, which were connected to catcher boats by ropes, to enable whalers to drag in the catch. At the same time, he devised the use of steamships for greater efficiency in hunting.

(Japan Whaling Association, 1986:14)

4. Fishery Law

- The Japanese government drew up regulations (The Meiji Fishery Law) covering fishermen's associations which, following existing custom and practice, sought to

maintain harmony within fishing communities in the Meiji era (1901-1910). The Fishery Law was revised a few times at the beginning of the Showa era (1933-1938). In 1949, fishery rights and licenses were legislated in the Fishery Law, a recognition that fishing rights are a common property right owned by the local Fishery Cooperative Association and its members. (Shoji, 1983:256)

5. Fisheries Cooperative Association (FCA)

- FCA membership was restricted to fisher men resident in the jurisdiction area of the association who worked 90-120 days a year (the period being determined by each FCA). This requirement for FCA membership is governed by the Fisheries Cooperative Association Law (1948), which also insures that the membership controlled the FCA. The principle role of an FCA is the planning, management and sustainable development of its sea territory, mainly by implementing and enforcing national and prefectural legislation and regulations, supplemented or complemented by those made locally. (Ruddle, 1986:3,5)

6. Community

Considered as a type of organiation, communities are complex systems of both social forms and cultural traits or behaviors which exist together as sets of connected and mutually interdependent activities of

different kinds. These activities - reproductive, subsistence, technological, economic, artistic, political, and religious - are, on the most rudimentary level of social evolution, little elaborated and separate. But on more complex levels of socio-political organizations, they become sufficiently independent and specialized to be called "institutions".

(Clifton, 1968:17)

7. Balanced Exchange

- Balanced reciprocity is characterized by precise balance. "The reciprocation is the customary equivalent of the thing received and is without delay.... Balanced reciprocity may be more loosely applied to transactions which stipulate returns of commensurate worth or utility within a finite and narrow period".

(Sahlins, 1965, cited in Befu 1977:264)

8. Generalized Exchange

- "The expectation of a direct material return is unseemly. At best it is implicit. The material side of the transaction is repressed by the social... the counter is not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality, the expectation of reciprocity is indefinite... Receiving goods lays on a diffuse obligation to reciprocate when necessary to the donor and/or possibly for the recipient. The requital thus may be very soon, but then again it may be never".

(Sahlins, 1965:147, cited in Befu, 1977:264)

9. Shinto Fundamentalism

- In the 19th century, there was a strong movement among the Shinto leaders to establish Shintoism through dogmatically separating it from other religions and belief systems. After the Meiji Restoration, numerous Shinto groups were organized to pursue their goal, which is the segregation of Shinto elements from others.

(H. Inoue, 1986)

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APPENDIX 1.

1985 FISHERY PRODUCTIONS IN ABASHIRI

Fishery	Ocean Fishery	Inland Fishery	Total	Total catch, ton % of the Total Catch	Total sale 1000 yen % of the Total Sale
Alaska Pollack	57,930.9(tons) 3,317,676(1000 yen)		57,930.9 3,317.676	64.6	34.3
Cod	1,575.2 141,475		1,575.2 141,475	1.8	1.5
Atka Mackerel	2,711.6 122,456		2,711.6 122,456	3.1	1.3
Flounder	1.455.3 348,840	147.7 53,423	1,603.0 402,263	1.8	4.2
Chum Salmon	2,590.4 1,394,947		2,5904 1,394,947	2.9	14.4
Chinook Salmon	365.7 148,051		365.7 148,051	0.4	1.5
Herring	152.3 33,931	6.5 2,015	158.8 35,946	0.2	0.4
Octopus	167.8 67,807		167.8 67,807	0.2	0.7
Squid	12 435		12 435	0.01	0.01
Mackerel	6.4 138		6.4 138	0.01	0.01
Rockfish	545.8 660,722		545.8 660,722	0.6	6.8
Shark	18.8 6,247		18.8 6.247	0.01	0.1
Icefish		87.5 78,116	87.5 78,116	0.01	0.8
Surf Smelt		53.8 19,728	53.8 19,728	0.01	0.2
Grey mullet		0.1 28	0.1 28	0.01	0.01

Wachna cod	90.6 7,489		90.6 7,489	0.1	0.1
Crab	128.8 158,150		128.8 158,150	0.2	1.6
		(in shell)			
Sea Urchin	8.1 86,943	57.7 27,796	65.8 114,739	0.01	1.2
Horsehair Crab	80.2 160,224		80.2 160,224	0.01	1.6
Neptune Whelk	721.7 126,633	21.9 10,156	743.6 136,789	0.9	1.4
Surf clam	8.9 28,656		8.9 28,656	0.01	0.3
Corbicula		528.4 193,735	528.4 193,735	0.6	2.0
Fresh water smelt		377.6 195,682	377.6 195,682	0.5	2.0
Shrimp		45.2 43,518	45.2 43,618	0.01	0.5
Scallop	2,777.3 531,364	1,002.9 192,651	3,780.2 724,015	4.2	7.5
		(thousand pieces)			
Scallop spat	84,069 242,005	173,843 472,853	257,912 714,858	-	7.4
Others	15,333.2 543,542	378.2 13,768	15,711.4 557,310	17.5	5.8
Whale	355.5 232,497		355.5 232,497	0.4	2.4
Total	87,025.7 8,360,228	2,707.5 1,303,569	89,733.2 9,663,797	100.0	100.0

APPENDIX 2.

ORGANIZATIONAL OUTLINE OF OCEAN/INLAND WATER FISHERIES AND ABASHIRI AND NISHI ABASHIRI FCA IN RELATION TO SMALL-TYPE WHALING

This figure has been removed because of the unavailability of copy right permission.

(Abashiri, 1985:1)

APPENDIX 3.

FISHERIES LICENSES AND FISHING RIGHTS IN ABASHIRI

1) Fisheries license

A. Fisheries licenses issued, in 1985.

(a) by the Minister of Agriculture , Forestry and Fisheries

Kinds of fishery	Number of vessels
Pelagic trawling	1
Mothership-type trawling	2
Offshore trawling	13
Pelagic tuna, skipjack fishery	1
North Pacific Ocean longline and gillnet fishery	2
Mothership-type salmon driftnet	3
Small-type whaling	2
Sub-total	24

(b) Issued under Ministerial Purview

Saury stick-held dipnet	4
Squid driftnet	7
Squid angling (medium size)	1
Sub-total	12

(c) Issued by the prefectural Governor

Pollock longline (over 10t)	6
Pollock set gillnet (over 10t)	9
Atka mackerel set gillnet (over 10t)	1
Herring set gillnet	2
Crab set gillnet	4
Horsehair crab basket net	5
Neptune whelk basket net (Abashiri Inlet)	2
SubTotal	29

(d) Issued by the district Governor

Herring set gillnet (Under 15t)	3
Pollock set gillnet (under 10t)	9
Cod set gillnet (under 50t)	5
Longline (cod, rockfish)	6
Saury stick-held dipnet (over 5t)	9
Scallop dredge net	5
Surf clam dredge net	9
Motorboat seine	20
Sub-total	66
Grand total (all licences)	131

B. Permission by Sea Area Fishery Coordination Committee

Squid angling (under 30t)	3

2) Fishing rights

A. Common fishing rights

Kinds of Fishery	Fishing Season	
	Ocean	Inland*
Fisheries for seaweed, shellfish, crustaceans and sedentary fish species.		
Tangle	July 10-Sept. 30	
Glue plant	April 1-Dec. 31	
Laver	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	
Nemacystus	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	
Short-necked clam	Jan. 1-July 15 Oct. 1-Dec. 31	
Surf clam	Jan. 1-May 31 Aug. 1-Dec. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Neptune whelk	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Sea slug	Jan. 1-April 30 June 16-Dec. 31	
Sea urchin	Jan. 1-Aug. 31 Nov. 1-Dec. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Angle worm (Potamilla myrios Marenzeller)	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	
Northern Sea prawn	July 1-Aug. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Scallop	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Swift's scallop	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	
Octopus	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	
Corbicula		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Sewing thread		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Oyster		Jan. 1-Dec. 31

*Inland bodies of water which connect to the ocean.

Fisheries employing fixed gear for sardine, herrings, squid, flounders and others.

Chinook salmon: small-scale set net	July 26-Sept. 12	
Sardine, Chinook salmon, herring: small-scale set net	April 1-July 25	
Squid, Atka Mackerel, Flounders: bottom trap net	March 1-Dec. 31	
Flounder: gillnet	March 1-Nov. 30	
Herring: gillnet	March 1-Dec. 31	
Surf smelt: gillnet	March 1-Dec. 31	
Atka mackerel: gillnet	March 1-Dec. 31	
Beach seine		
Smelt: beach seine	July 1-Dec. 31	
Fresh water smelt, shrimp, carp fishery		
Fresh water smelt		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Shrimp		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Carp		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Ice fish		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Flounder		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Herring		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Surf smelt		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Rainbow smelt		Jan. 1-Dec. 31
B. Demarcated fishing rights		
Scallop:cultivation	Jan. 1-Dec. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
Salmon:set net	July 15-Dec. 10	

*Fishing ground is allotted for each fishery along with the fishing season.

(Abashiri, 1985:15)

APPENDIX 4

Proposed Definitions by Michell and Reeves

	Terms	Proposed Meaning
WHO	A. aboriginal whale fishery	By endemic (autochthonous) local people for a period exceeding locally documented history. The products of the fishery being used locally.
	B. non-aboriginal whale fishery	By people who can be of diverse heritage but who come together for the common purpose of capturing whales and processing whale products for personal consumption and/or monetary gain, for which the history is usually well documented.
WHERE	A. local whale fishery	Conducted at or near the area of permanent occupancy of the group pursuing the fishery.
	B. regional whale fishery	Conducted, at least in part, well outside the area of permanent occupancy of the group pursuing the fishery.
WHEN	1. primitive whaling	As developed in prehistoric times, carried out using implements and techniques associated with entrapment, driving and/or netting, the hand harpoon-line drogue method, or poisoning or bacterial methods.
	2. 19th century whaling	As developed in historic times, based, on harpoon-fastline-open boat techniques, pursued from shore or from sailing mother ships, using a lance for the kill and oar-and/or wind-driven open boats.

3. modern whaling	As developed mainly since ca. 1860, based on mechanical means of transport and the common application of firearms and explosives in the killing of whales.

A. subsistence whale fishery	Conducted by a cohesive community of people who have at least a partially non-cash economy, the products of the fishery being clearly intended for local consumption, a significant portion as human food.
WHY	
B. Commercial whale fishery	Conducted by anyone for the main or ancillary purpose of selling one or more products in a cash economy.

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1. traditional whaling	With techniques and implements long fixed in the culture of the hunting group, which iself has a history of such whaling spanning many human generations, and largely depending on material cultural items gathered or produced locally (and exclusive of engines and explosives)
HOW	
2. transitional whaling	With traditional methods, but modified by introduction of such implements as firearms, explosive projectiles, and mechanized means of transport.
3. mechanical whaling	With techniques and implements centered on the use of explosives and engines, usually (but not always) involving deck-mounted cannons, explosive grenades, direct fastening to the whale, and diesel, gas or steam-powered boats and ships.
a.) shore-based whale fishery	Conducted directly from land or ice, or by one or more vessels that catch the whales and deliver the carcasses for land-based processing.